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by	
⑩	Richard Bernard McKenna
⑪	March 1979
Thesis Advisor: Richard S. Elster	

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## Alternative Approaches to the U.S. Navy Officer Evaluation System

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

## MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MANAGEMENT

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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## ABSTRACT

Weaknesses of the present U.S. Navy Fitness Report Reporting System are reviewed and discussed. An alternative personnel evaluation system is proposed in order to take advantage of the benefits of several evaluative techniques. Different evaluation techniques would be used in the several phases of an officer's career. In the junior officer (developmental) phase, emphasis would be on management by objectives, stressing counseling and feedback. In the middle (staffing/managerial) phase emphasis would be placed on evaluation for selection and promotion. In the senior (executive) phase, the use of assessment centers is proposed. Finally, a list of recommendations is provided.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. OVERVIEW

A common topic of discussion in any given circle of Naval Officers is the U.S. Navy Officer Fitness Report. The report's present structure and use have much to do with an individual officer's success in his profession. Often, it has a subtle influence on how he conducts himself in pursuit of his personal objectives. Its use, manipulation and interpretation are constant sources of discussion, apprehension, and in some cases, downright suspicion. For example, a widespread feeling seems to exist that if an officer is not in the top ten percent evaluation category, his career is ruined. This contributes to a consensus that, as a general rule, all marks are inflated, and a widespread cynicism which manifests itself in the observation that "we are all water walkers." Herein lies a possibly even greater problem--that criticisms and discussions tend to revolve around how the existing form should be modified or revised, all the while assuming that the current evaluation system is a given which cannot change. The fact of the matter is that other evaluation techniques do exist and are available to use if we choose to use them. Moreover, it is conceivable that different evaluation techniques can provide the optimal results for the individual and the system at different points in time. Thus, in looking for better ways to perform the Navy officer evaluation function,

it would be well to look beyond the current rating scale and peer comparison system, exploring other techniques which might replace or enhance that existing method.

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the present form, the milieu in which it is used and provides suggestions as to why other evaluation techniques might be considered for Navy officer performance evaluation.

#### B. THE PRESENT FORM AND ITS USES

The current fitness report form, NAVPERS 1611/1 (Rev 9-72) and its preparation aid, the performance appraisal work sheet, are shown on pages 10 to 13. The form is designed to be type-written using the optical character reader (OCR) format for rapid assimilation and computerization of information.

Fitness reports are required to be submitted on all officers, Rear Admiral to Lieutenant on an annual basis, while Lieutenants (Junior Grade) and Ensigns are required semi-annually. (BUPERS INST 1611/1: Encl (1)). Reports are also required upon detachment of the officer and his reporting senior (ibid).

"The appraisal worksheet...is specifically designed to assist the senior during the appraisal discussion. The use of action-oriented definitions in the 'specific aspect of performance' section enables the reporting senior to suggest specific areas of improvements to the officer being evaluated." (NAVPERS 1611/1)

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P1611-1

## REPORT ON THE FITNESS OF OFFICERS

1 NAME (LAST FIRST MIDDLE)	2 GRADE	3 DESIG	4 SSN				
5 ACOUTRA/TEMAC	6 UIC	7 SHIP/STATION	8 DATE REPORTED				
OCCASION FOR REPORT		PERIOD OF REPORT					
<input type="checkbox"/> 9 PERIODIC	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 DETACHMENT OF REPORTING SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 DETACHMENT OF OFFICER	12 FROM				
TYPE OF REPORT		BASIS FOR OBSERVATION					
<input type="checkbox"/> 14 REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 CURRENT	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 SPECIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> 17 OPS CDR				
18 CLOSE				<input type="checkbox"/> 19 FREQUENT	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 INFREQUENT		
21 EMPLOYMENT OF COMMAND (CONTINUED ON REVERSE SIDE OF RECORD COPY)				22 DAYS OF COMBAT			
23 REPORTING SENIOR (LAST NAME, F. M.)	24 TITLE	25 GRADE	26 DESIG	27 SSN			
28 DUTIES ASSIGNED (CONTINUED ON REVERSE SIDE OF RECORD COPY)							
SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF PERFORMANCE (TYPE IN OCR CODE LETTER FROM WORK SHEET)							
29 GOAL SETTING & ACHIEVEMENT	30 SUBORDINATE MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT	31 WORKING RELATIONS	32 EQUIP & MATERIAL MANAGEMENT	33 NAVY ORGAN SUPPORT			
34 RESPONSE IN STRESSFUL SITUATIONS		35 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY	36 SPEAKING ABILITY	37 WRITING ABILITY			
38 SEA MANSHP	39 AIR MANSHP	40 WATCH STANDING	41	42	43		
44 SUBSPECIALTY CODE REQUIRED BY BILLET (WORK SHEET CODE)							
45 YES	46 NO	47 FREQUENT	48 INFREQUENT	49 NONE	50 PERFORMANCE		
MISSION CONTRIBUTION	NOT OBS.	TOP	TYPICALLY EFFECTIVE OFFICER			BOTTOM	
		1%	5%	10%	30%	50%	30%
51 EVALUATION							
52 SUMMARY							
TREND OF PERFORMANCE (TYPE IN OCR CODE FROM WORK SHEET)							
53 FIRST REPORT	54 CONSISTENT	55 IMPROVING	56 DECLINING				
DESIREDABILITY (TYPE IN OCR CODE FROM WORK SHEET)							
57 COMMAND	58 OPERATIONAL	59 STAFF	60 JOINT/OSD	61 FOREIGN SHORE			
RECOMMENDATION FOR PROMOTION (WORK SHEET)							
62 EARLY	63 REGULAR	64 NO	65 NUMBER RECOMMENDED	66 RANKING			
PERSONAL TRAITS (TYPE IN OCR CODE FROM WORK SHEET)							
67 JUDGMENT	68 IMAGINATION	69 ANALYTIC ABILITY	70 PERSONAL BEHAVIOR	71 FORCEFULNESS	72 MILITARY BEARING		
C							
73	74	75	76				
WEAKNESSES DISCUSSED? (TYPE IN OCR CODE FROM WORK SHEET)							
77 NONE NOTED	78 YES	79 NO	80 NOT DESIRED	81 ATTACHED			
D							
E							
F							
33 DATE FORWARDED							
35 SIGNATURE OF REPORTING SENIOR							
36 SIGNATURE OF OFFICER EVALUATED (AW BUPERS INST 1611-12-SERIES) I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE SEEN THIS REPORT AND HAVE BEEN APPRISED OF MY PERFORMANCE							
47 SIGNATURE OF REGULAR REPORTING SENIOR ON CONCURRENT AND CONCURRENT SPECIAL REPORT							

NAVPERS 1611-1 (REV. 9-72) S/N 0106 LF 078 2112

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1974 - 557-687

Fig. 1. Report on the fitness of officers.

21 EMPLOYMENT OF COMMAND (Continued)

28 DUTIES ASSIGNED (Continued)

58 COMMENTS Particularly comment upon the officer's overall leadership ability, personal traits not listed on the reverse side, and estimated or actual performance in combat. Include comments pertaining to unique skills and distinctions that may be important to career development and future assignment. A mark in boxes with an asterisk (\*) indicates adversely and supporting comments are required.

(NOTE: This is the first of four identical forms. The last three (separated by carbons) make up the official fitness report; one is the OCR copy, one is the record copy, and one is the officer's copy. This work sheet is removed before the official report is prepared.)

Fig. 1 (Cont'd)

Fig. 2. Appraisal Work Sheet

Fig. 2. (Cont'd)

Administratively, the primary intent of the Officer Fitness Report is to provide the "basis for selection of officers for promotion and assignment to duty." (BUPERS Inst 1611.12E) Encompassed in what could be considered administrative uses are wage and salary increases, determination of training needs, promotions, transfers, and discharges. [McCormick and Tiffin:194] The Navy's objectives in promoting or assigning officers either directly or indirectly include all of these functions. Therefore, the administrative uses to which the Fitness Report is put will be discussed in terms of two sub-categories: promotion and assignment.

#### 1. Promotion

By Section 5701, Chapter 543, Title 10, United States Code, the Navy is required to select all officers to the rank of Lieutenant and above in a formal selection process consisting of an officially convened board of officers. Additionally, the Navy is required by statute to identify those officers at the three-year point who are unfit for service. [Herman: Interview] These boards, in addition to their basic purpose of selection/non-selection, are also normally authorized and directed to select a small percentage of deserving officers for early promotion [Nelson:31] and to determine those officers to be dismissed by reason of unfitness. [Title I, Officer Personnel Act, 1947, Section 109] The Officer Fitness Report is so fundamentally supportive of this process that a reporting senior is required to indicate whether his reportees are recommended for promotion on time

(due course), early, or are not recommended for promotion. (This is considered an adverse report and presents a potential paradox in that the Navy is now on record in proposed DOPMA legislation as recognizing non-selection as being without stigma. (H.R. 13958) The "adverse" connotation presently associated with the "not recommended" alternative might call for a future additional category, i.e., "unfit for promotion," (adverse). Another alternative might be the elimination of the entire category, as in Coast Guard fitness reports. (The Coast Guard's fitness reports will be discussed later in this thesis.) The overwhelming bulk of fitness report marks, however, are said to fall in the "recommended" and "early promotion" categories. Additionally, the fitness report calls for the evaluation of specific traits through the use of rating scales. The fitness report also requires the evaluator to provide a narrative commentary on performance and achievement of the subordinate during the reporting period (in effect a critical incident list). What is said or not said in this narrative is often felt to have significant bearing on an officer's promotion opportunity.

Having performed, and been reported on, the officer's promotion opportunity rests on three additional factors: (1) the Secretary of the Navy's guidance to the selection board, (2) the officers who comprise the selection board and (3) the number (or fraction) of officers to be promoted. The first factor will traditionally be affected by the Navy's current needs or attitudes regarding who should be promoted (e.g., previous selection boards have emphasized a desire for those officers with combat experience, project manager

potential, human resources acumen, etc.). Although this might appear to give advantage to officers with the prescribed experience, it is not necessarily a complete disadvantage to those who are not so blessed. In the first place, while the Navy might desire a specific sort of officer, sufficient numbers and quality might not exist. (Consider what might happen, for instance, if aviator retention declined to an unsatisfactory level. In some future selection board, it is conceivable that shortages of promotable aviators at, for example, the rank of Lieutenant Commander, might create vacancies for qualified officers of other communities who might not otherwise have been selected.) Secondly, while the Secretary's guidance might be followed explicitly, this need not be so. In fact, it is usually couched in broad terms which may be liberally interpreted. This gives rise to the second factor. The board itself probably brings with it biases, due to their experiences and personalities, which can come into play because of the broad guidance. Finally, numbers of officers that may be promoted to different ranks vary yearly due to authorized strength levels, retirements, deaths, etc. This can affect the officer's eligibility to be reviewed for promotion, depending on the number of officers to be promoted and his position on the lineal list of the current Register of Naval Officers (NAVPER 15018). Thus, officers commissioned in the same fiscal year who have been promoted together through the ranks, might find at the rank of Commander, for example, that one might not be sufficiently high on the lineal list for eligibility and will not have the opportunity for promotion until the next year.

## 2. Assignment

There is a symbiotic relationship between assignment and the promotion function. In essence, without good (i.e., "career-enhancing") assignments (also a critical factor in developing "visibility") one cannot be promoted. [Moore and Trout:452] A community's detailers and placement representatives, therefore, play an important role in an officer's career. At the junior level, it is their interpretation of an officer's fitness reports that will dictate the nature of his assignments, or (more fairly) that will close the loop in the "triad of detailing" with the officer's desires and the Navy's needs. [NAVPERS 15197:4,5] These officers derive their background for this responsibility from a combination of their personal and professional experiences, their predecessor's experience, their perceptions of current official assignment policies, and from the results of recent selection boards. This suggests that the assignment process, while heavily equipped with administrative machinery in the form of records, billet requirements, selection data, and official policy, is by no means free from the biases of its assignment officers. An apparent recognition of this situation led in the early 1970's to a progressively greater reliance on officially constituted boards for selection to the more crucial billets. Thus, there now exist formal boards for major commands, ship and squadron commands, shipboard executive officer,<sup>1</sup> test pilot schools, staff colleges and postgraduate education, and subspecialty designators. The

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<sup>1</sup>This selection function has been returned to the Officer Assignment Division commencing Fiscal Year 1979 (Officer Personnel Newsletter Fall 1978).

net effect has been to take "credentialing" responsibilities from the officer assignment branch and to place them into the hands of the community affected by the particular selection.

This system has both positive and negative aspects. The boarding process most definitely does more to involve the concerned communities, attempts to ensure that all eligible officers receive an opportunity for consideration, and probably reduces fears of bureaucratic favoritism. At the same time, however, it eliminates from the selection process the officers presumably most knowledgeable concerning the nuances of Fitness Reports, and introduces the biases of officers whose familiarity with Fitness Reports might or might not be adequate to the task at hand. This suggests that the present system using boards would be improved by establishing some standardized education regarding fitness reports and fitness report data for all potential selection board members.

In regard to personal development, little evidence can be found in the instruction that there is much importance attached to this aspect of personnel evaluation. Later sections of the instruction, particularly Section Six, allude to the additional merit of the report as a counseling or feedback device. The reference to feedback and counseling stresses the mechanics of utilizing the Appraisal Work Sheet rather than portraying feedback and counseling as desirable management techniques.

Current literature would argue with the lack of emphasis on the counseling/feedback role of evaluations. The format of the Fitness Report uses a combination of rating

scale, personnel comparison, and critical incident techniques. McCormick and Tiffin classify the two general purposes of performance evaluation as: (1) administrative and (2) performance improvement. [McCormick and Tiffin:194] Porter, Lawler, and Hackman point out that individuals want and seek feedback about their performance since it helps them learn more about themselves. [Porter, et. al. 318]

#### C. THE PROBLEM

"Reports on the fitness of officers are an objective appraisal of their performance, as documented by their reporting seniors, from the date of initial appointment until separation....<sup>1</sup> Fitness reports are the primary basis for selection of officers for promotion and assignment to duty. Realistic, objective evaluations of individual officers are essential to the accomplishment of each of these tasks." This quote reflects the main intent and purpose of the report on fitness of officers as defined in the governing BUPERS Instruction 1611.12E of 21 July 1977 (as modified by Change 1 of 10 January 1978).

Promotion and assignment based on realistic and objective evaluation--these are important and meaningful goals of manpower management. Nonetheless, questions come to mind as to how efficient the present fitness report is in achieving its stated objectives. Does it permit appropriate assignments to be made? Does it ensure that selection boards are promoting

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<sup>1</sup>An administrative reference to procedures to be followed is the case of death is omitted.

the "best fitted" officers at each rank level? Are the grading criteria the most valid available, and are they valid throughout an officer's career? Is the guidance to the grading officer specific enough? Too specific?

Furthermore there is the issue of the personal development of the individual officer. For example, how valuable a tool is the present fitness report for counseling or providing feedback on strengths and weaknesses? Is enough official recognition given to this area?

Finally, there is the question of the applicability of the form for use throughout an officer's entire career development. Is the present form appropriate to evaluate everyone in the ranks of Ensign through Captain? Are the needs of the system and the individual best served by use of a single form?

It will be contended in this thesis that the present officer fitness report form attempts to do too much. Consider that the present form is applied, for example, to a four-year Lieutenant in the Nurse Corps and to a twenty-six year Captain serving as Chief of Staff for a numbered fleet. While both billets have a considerable amount of responsibility, performance in them must certainly be judged on different factors. To attempt to do justice to the performance of both officers with the same form asks for much, considering the diversity of their duties, experiences, assignment potentials, and promotion opportunities. More importantly, we ask this form to reflect the performance of officers at various rank levels throughout their thirty-year careers. This leads to evaluators adapting the form to what they feel are the most important

elements in an officer's career at any point in time. Thus, enter "folk-lore" as a basis for what it takes to succeed. Under these circumstances, an officer can find his evaluation more influenced by his reporting senior's perceptions than it is by his actual performance. It is conceivable that, for different rank levels, not only different criteria but different evaluation techniques might be appropriate. Would not some presently available evaluative techniques serve different phases better than others?

The career phases suggested in this thesis are as follows:

1. Ensign - Lieutenant (Junior Grade)
2. Lieutenant - Lieutenant Commander
3. Commander - Captain

It is fairly obvious that these three categories mesh with the Naval officer career stages of:

1. Training, administration, watch standing (developmental).
2. Departmental and staff level management and advanced training.
3. Command and executive responsibilities.

Although it is not the intent of this thesis to do so, it would appear that, with the increasing specialization of various staff communities, consideration might also be given to derive forms appropriate to their individual needs.

It is the intent of this thesis to consider this alternative (phasing) approach to Naval officer fitness reports to consider different evaluative techniques at different phases and to evaluate its usefulness to the present structure of the officer corps.

## II. ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEVELOPMENTAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

This chapter will discuss evaluation techniques applicable to this thesis. First, a technique which is largely administrative, the rating scale and personnel comparison evaluation system, will be reviewed. This technique is most closely related to the present Navy evaluation system and thus common problems with this technique as they relate to the Navy will also be discussed. Secondly, personnel development as related to evaluations will be reviewed in the context of the management by objectives (MBO) appraisal method. Finally, an evaluation process that can serve both administrative and developmental purposes, the assessment center, will be described.

### A. RATING SCALE AND PERSONNEL COMPARISON EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Eighty percent of all U.S. companies have some form of appraisal system. Evaluation forms in ninety-eight percent of these firms are designed to be completed by the immediate supervisor. [Hamner and Schmidt:228] The Navy is by no means alone in its quest for an improved personnel evaluation methodology. A recent report on procedures used in American industry indicated that over half of the 293 firms surveyed had developed new systems within the previous three years. But, despite this effort, the report concludes: "Current systems are still widely regarded as a nuisance at best and a dangerous evil at

worst."<sup>1</sup> As one personnel director quipped, appraisal systems are "like religion, if there were one right one, I'm sure we'd all believe in it."<sup>2</sup> Given this general attitude, a change in functioning evaluation systems should be reviewed very carefully in terms of what is to be gained by forsaking an existing program.

The U.S. Navy places its reliance on peer comparison and rating scale evaluation systems, especially in the middle and senior ranks. It is, therefore, desirable to discuss briefly some principles and considerations of these systems.

#### 1. Rating Scales

"Rating scales are the most widely used type of performance evaluation system. The basic principle of this method provides for the rating of employees on each of a number of different traits or factors....The rating scales used by different organizations differ widely in the number of traits or factors to be rated and the particular factors used....It should be noted, however, that some of the traits or factors used in rating scales do not really represent different dimensions of behavior." [McCormick and Tiffin:195] Two studies are cited in evidence of the difficulty in differentiating between traits:

a. The first study used data gathered from employees evaluated on twelve traits. After correlation of each trait with every other, the data were subjected to factor analysis, which revealed that "for practical purposes, there were only

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<sup>1</sup>Anderson, Harry B., "The Rating Game," The Wall Street Journal, May 23, 1978.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

two basic factors--ability to do the present job (a very general factor) and quality of performance." [Ewart et al:486]

b. A second study using twenty trait ratings showed generally good agreement of the raters on traits, but that there was very little discrimination on traits for each rating." This low discrimination seems to indicate that the number of stimuli to be rated could be reduced. That is, since each trait would possess little discriminant validity, it makes no sense to rate all 20 dimensions." [Kavanagh et al:46]

The Specific Aspects of Performance (SAP) section of the U.S. Navy Fitness Report, Items 29-37) and the Personal Traits Section, Items 67-72, particularly in the Appraisal Work Sheet Section, identify factors which the Navy wants considered in evaluating officer performance. A comparison with the previous evaluation form (NAVPERS 1611/1), indicates that while the Navy heeded these findings in the area of personal traits, (reducing traits to six from the previous sixteen) it also chose to increase the performance factors evaluated from five to nine.

It is in the use of factors and traits that evaluation systems can be regarded as subjective. "Considerable evidence indicates that certain personality traits, such as character and aggressiveness, are viewed so nebulously that agreement on whether people possess them is almost impossible. Such traits should not be included unless qualified in considerable detail. Generally, the closer the factors are to job behavior and results, the more raters will agree in their evaluations of a person." [Hamner and Schmidt:233] The present Navy Fitness

Report has increased from earlier fitness reports the number of factors that must be considered in each specific aspect of performance, perhaps indicative of an effort to heed the above advice. This is not so in the case of personal traits, where criteria continue to be somewhat general.

## 2. Peer Comparison

"Where the rating scales provide for rating against some defined standard, the use of personnel comparison systems allows individuals to be rated with each other." [McCormick and Tiffin:195] Peer comparison would require a complete differentiation of ratees by individual standing or by predetermined percentages of men to be placed in each category. This is known as the "forced distribution technique." [Hamner and Schmidt:233, 234] The forced distribution technique yields a zero-sum game. "A zero-sum game is one in which any change for the participants adds up to zero. For example, if two men are playing cards and one wins \$5.00, the other automatically has to lose \$5.00 and the net result is zero. Similarly, if there are ten men in a department working at different levels of effectiveness, by definition five of them are 'below-average.' Thus, if two of the below-average men leave, then one of the previously above-average men must fall into the below-average category." [Thompson and Dalton:51] They also point out that "all purposive human organizations have both zero-sum and nonzero-sum characteristics." [Thompson and Dalton:152] They are zero-sum in that not everyone can be at the top, but at the same time nonzero sum in that there is always the potential for both the organization and the individual to improve or regress.

For a military service example of such a system, consider the officer evaluation system of the U.S. Air Force. Dissatisfied with its Officer Evaluation Reports (OER), the Air Force opted for a quota system which imposed the most rigid zero-sum relationship on its officers of any of the services. [Baker:3-7] The Air Force heralded the new system as being positive in all respects. Two ensuing Air Command and Staff College research studies were in disagreement with this optimism.

The first study of the new system had this to say, "While there were some positive benefits of the new evaluation system, the majority of the research points to a completely dysfunctional system that will create a competitive environment. This environment will lack open and honest communication, increase sensitivity to differences and threats, develop suspicions and hostile attitudes, and destroy collaborating effort. In the writer's opinion, the Air Force had adopted systems that will curtail innovation and decrease both the quality and quantity of volunteers for special category assignments. In addition, the new system will signal failure earlier in a Lieutenant Colonel's career. This will direct his motivation to preparation for a second career rather than being fully productive in his present position." [Jacobcik:5]

A simultaneous but independent study surveyed the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of 1045 Air University students and found that, "The Air Force Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) System is not being generally accepted by the Officer Corps. These results, when compared to a previous

survey, show that negative perceptions are being maintained. Furthermore, it is becoming apparent that the controlled distribution of ratings aspect is causing dysfunctional behavior modifications that threaten to decrease Air Force mission effectiveness." [Rhoades et al:5] (Such criticisms presumably brought about the relaxation in comparison requirements related in Chapter III.)

The U.S. Navy peer comparison is considerably more permissive than that of the Air Force, permitting the ranking of as many officers as desired in any one of nine categories (BUPERS Inst 1611.12E). Additionally, a requirement to numerically rank all officers marked in the left most "high" column for accelerated promotion has been eliminated (Change 1 of 5 April 1978). These instructions seem to increase the probability of grade inflation.

A report on the matter of U.S. Army grade inflation expresses one sentiment: "The adoption of a new report may lower the inflationary trend for a short time as has happened in the past; however, as has also happened with every form since 1925, inflation will take over, making the new report as useless by selection boards as the previous ones." [Cortner:19]

An important reason for introducing the present Navy report was to eliminate grade inflation. [Lockman:1] The Lockman-Maulden Report related results of a study conducted to evaluate the form: "The results of the pilot program indicated that the objectives of the revised form were met. Substantially smaller percentages of officers were given top marks on the revised form in comparison to their marks on the

current form; and the reaction of 75 percent of the reporting seniors and 85 percent of the evaluated officers to the revised form and its use were favorable." [CNO Ltr 96/2461 of 14 Dec 1973]

Several years later, it was questionable that this was still the case. Grade inflation was featured as one problem by an article appearing in the "Professional Notes" section of the March 1977 issue of the Naval Institute Proceedings. The article, entitled "The Current Fitness Report: Howgozit?" by Commander W. T. Pendley, USN, in addressing several proposals for improvement in the current report, touched off a letter forum in five subsequent issues on the problem of Fitness Reports in which the combating of grade inflation was a common issue. [Pendley:101] In a September 1978 Proceedings article, Captain Frank M. Snyder, USN, continued on the same topic in an article entitled, "Grading the Fitness Report." Thus, fairly or not, grade inflation as it implies to both rating scale and personnel comparison, is perceived as a problem in the Navy and is likely to continue as such as long as this perception continues.

To counteract inflation, and to insure a satisfactory spread of ratings, several steps have proven to be of use in the business world:

- a. Maintain security so that evaluations are not available to the men rated or fed back to them. [Stockford:94]
- b. Avoid ambiguous descriptions of the characteristics to be rated on the scale; the rater must have a clear understanding of exactly what job behavior he is to consider. [Barrett:333]

c. Carry out training aimed at providing an understanding of the desirability of a wide range of scores. [Levine:29]

It can be seen from the brief discussion of rating scale and comparison systems that there are many and differing views as to how best to implement these evaluation techniques. It must be remembered that these above systems are not the only systems available to management, who is continually enjoined to use the system which best suits its needs. [Anderson, Oberg:61] On the other hand, changing the system is not always a good solution. An example is provided wherein management consultants relate their surprise at the effects of a new evaluation system which they anticipated would be "uniform and logical": "...A few years later, when we studied the corporation, we found that in this division....both the supervisors and the men shared a deep dissatisfaction. Moreover, investigation revealed that a large part of the widespread discouragement, the numerous instances of declining performance, and the distant relationship between management and the men could be attributed to the new performance appraisal system." [Thompson and Dalton:150]

#### B. PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH RATING SCALE AND PEER COMPARISON EVALUATION SYSTEMS

In addition to the problem of grade inflation just discussed, there are several other problems with rating scales and peer comparison evaluations that pertain to Navy Fitness Reports.

1. Little or No Specific Education of Evaluators

In the Navy Fitness Report and Officer Evaluation System, the education effort could best be described as "loosely organized." The following are available to educate Navy officers about the Fitness Report.

a. A comprehensive basic instruction.

b. A two-hour lecture by Navy Manpower Center representatives at Prospective Commanding Officer (PCO)/Prospective Executive Officer (PXO) School.

c. Commanding Officers' experiences.

d. Occasional articles in professional Navy journals.

e. Leadership and Management Education and Training.

f. Readings and Seminar discussions in the management portion at the Naval War College command and staff course.

A worst case view, then, would suggest that the only formal education in the use of a document of such potential is two hours for prospective (surface) ship commanding and executive officers, and a seminar that can be taken by those officers attending the Naval War College.

2. Rating Officer Objectivity

The rater often faces a basic dilemma when filling out an officer's Fitness Report: whether to provide diagnostic feedback to his subordinate, to mark the form in the fashion required to influence the ratee's promotion opportunity in a desired way, or to rate the officer in accordance with current fitness report instructions. To some extent, diagnostic feedback can be provided by means of the appraisal work sheet which will at least show notable strengths and weaknesses.

Since this sheet is used only to develop the form and not as

a formal portion of the report, it can provide a discussion basis for constructive coaching of the subordinate. This feedback can make the rater feel schizophrenic, because strict adherence to the intent of the fitness report instruction, or the baring of ratee weaknesses in the fitness report, even though minor in nature, will probably have a pronounced adverse impact on the ratee's promotion opportunity. (See discussion in Paragraphs C through F below.) In resolving this dilemma, most commanding rating officers are probably more influenced by loyalty to their people than to the system.

It has also been pointed out that, "few supervisors possess the necessary insight and tact to tell a subordinate how to improve and are therefore reluctant to do so." [Dayal:27] Moreover, it puts the manager in the position of "playing God" by judging the worth of his fellow man. [MacGregor:89] Therefore, the rater would seem to need assistance in performing his evaluator responsibilities. The rater's evaluations can be improved, such as by making them more objective, by focusing on performance in relation to specific goals, [Thompson and Dalton:156] or by eliminating criteria which they are not qualified to judge, or which are irrelevant to the task at hand. [McCormick and Tiffin:212]

### 3. Overworked Forms

The one Navy Officer Fitness Report serves ten rank levels, three major line branches, and nine major staff corps. Additionally, officers are performing in a variety of billets that can be categorized as command or staff, operational or administrative, diplomatic, bureaucratic, or as a combination thereof. Clearly, it is unlikely that one form can provide

the detail necessary to give an accurate account of officer performance when the billet duties are so heterogeneous. The common form is, however, administratively convenient. It enables the system to operate with the one form governed by a reasonably comprehensive instruction. In theory, selection boards and assignment officers can make judgments based on an essentially common data base. But commonality to this extent is not completely necessary. For one thing, communities compete within themselves for the most important selections such as promotion and command. [NAVPERS 15197:33,37,47] Also, each community maintains its own basic assignment group, with the line community further broken down by the four warfare specialities (Air, Special, Subsurface and Surface). Therefore, (omitting the line sub-communities) by expanding the number of form types to the number of specialties, the opportunity exists to deal with specifics of interest to each community without detracting from another's special requirements.

The common form must, in practicality, tend toward the general in order to be of any use to the entire officer corps. This contributes to non-specificity in the grading criteria, which further contributes to grade inflation in that the ratee must be graded reasonably high on the general rating categories offered, or be condemned by implication (e.g., a grade of "C" in the category "Navy Organizational Support" could be itself be an indicator of a weak report, for how can you be a successful Naval officer and only moderately support the organization?) [Maher Interview]

The probable end effects are that rating officers are not very differentiating in the forced choice portion (Items 29-37, 67-72; see pages 12-13) of the form, and a greater emphasis is then placed on the narrative portion of the evaluation (Item 88; see page 13).

#### 4. Biases

The word "bias" as used here refers to some forms of distortion by which a rater's evaluation of a ratee can be affected. These are common tendencies which impact upon Navy Officer Fitness Report data:

##### a. Halo Effect

This bias refers to the individual rated either high or low on a large number of factors because of a perception specific to one factor, such as an aspect of personality. [McCormick and Tiffin:209] When this bias operates, a popular individual is likely to benefit, regardless of productivity, ingenuity, managerial skills, or other factors. Although personality is the factor cited here, a halo effect can be built around whatever trait the rater holds as important. The Navy probably contributes to this tendency by use of an "overall performance" block. For this general appraisal, the remainder of the evaluation is most likely to flow. On a grander scale, there is a possible halo effect that can accrue to an officer from where he has served or by virtue of his promotion status. [Moore and Trout:464] An evaluation is, therefore, often likely to have downstream effects (good or bad) on subsequent evaluations, aiding or impeding desired assignments, and endowing an officer with a reputation that

can precede him to his next assignment. Halo effect in the context of promotion status is chiefly used in regard to the early select officer, who in effect becomes blessed with the status of "front runner until proven otherwise." Unfortunately, the opposite situation exists for the non-selected officer, his present performance perhaps to the contrary. [Moore and Trout:462]

b. Constant Error

This refers to the tendency to concentrate ratings in one area of a rating scale. [McCormick and Tiffin:210] For example, a cluster of ratings toward the upper end of the scale would reflect a leniency tendency, a more centralized set of ratings would indicate a central tendency. The current officer evaluation system then, by virtue of grade inflation, is most reflective of the leniency tendency. It would seem that this effect would go hand in hand with the halo effect. Constant error in the Officer Fitness Report System is more than a tendency, however. It provides an unarticulated method of indicating strengths or shortcomings (more often the latter) by indicating deviations from the (leniency) norm. A rating officer can, for example, use the fitness report to indicate his pleasure at the ratee's overall performance and substantiate his rating with supporting grades in the personal traits and other contributing portions, but rate his markedly different in a single area such as personal appearance. A pet peeve is thus communicated to the ratee and will not count for much at selection or assignment time unless it is a recurring item.

Rating tendencies can be identified and used to advantage in rating the rater. An accumulation of fitness reports written by an individual officer could conceivably be used to determine his particular rating tendencies and to aid in:

i. Counseling to bring him more closely in line with the norm, or,

ii. Applying a correction factor to adjust his ratings to an established norm.

Various branches of the armed forces (including the Navy) have experimented with both approaches, but with spotty results. [Lockman:64,65]

##### 5. Contamination

This refers to the fact that raters can be influenced by factors extraneous to the evaluation, such as the rating policies of different organizations, the job descriptions, or the sex, age, and experience of the ratee. [McCormick and Tiffin:210] The Navy seems to have experienced some of these effects. Contamination should be differentiated between the effect of "hard" and "easy" graders (attributable to the leniency tendency). It speaks more to the officer designator, the particular organization to which attached, and the job description occupied within that organization. A study has shown that overall scores of officers of differing designators but of the same rank will vary by designator. [Lockman and Maulden] Similarly, in a tour of duty in the BUPERS Officer Distribution Division, the author was assured (by his supervisor) a top rated fitness report was division policy, because of the

selectivity involved in ordering individuals to such duties. A study has also show that there are differences in the average fitness assigned ratings of various types of duty stations, but that there are relatively small in comparison with the large individual differences among officers in the ratings they received. [Githens et al]

#### 6. Reliability

This refers to the consistency with which evaluations are made either by different raters or by the same rater at different times. McCormick and Tiffin [p. 206] state that this reliability is to some degree a function of the rating method used, and that the coefficients of reliability of data from conventional rating scales are lower than those from other rating systems, such as comparison or forced-choice rating systems. This fact is pointed out because of the Navy's use of rating scales. No data are presently available on the reliability of Fitness Report data.

#### 7. Discussion

To give an appreciation of the difficulties that these evaluation problems pose in using the Navy Officer Fitness Report, a brief narrative in the context of the junior officer is provided:

A commanding officer should realize that he must be careful of what his evaluations reflect if his junior officers are to get a good start. Lower ranking officers inevitably must be compared with a relatively large number of their contemporaries because of the basic organizational structure of most Navy activities. [Lawson:27] It is a commonly shared

opinion that these two factors (supportive raters and number of peers) contribute a great deal to grade inflation very early on in an officer's career. This is particularly evident in the surface warfare community where the "first out of the gate" will have the opportunity for assignment to some very desirable, and in some cases, necessary "front runner" tours, such as Flag Lieutenant, small command CO/XO, and (a critical selection) to Surface Warfare Department Head School. Once more, the visibility factor shows itself. [Moore and Trout:456]

In the desire to look after one's hard-working officers, the temptation is great to lose objectivity in the evaluation process. Thus, in an effort to portray the junior officer's excellence, shortcomings tend to be ignored or overlooked. Thus, to a large extend, an opportunity for feedback and counseling is missed. This has several undesirable implications; in the first place, the junior officer loses the feedback opportunity at a formative time in his career when feedback is likely to do the most good. Secondly, the inflated evaluation is often distorted. The possibility exists that an officer could be learning the wrong lessons. Finally, the officer may in the future expect inflated reports as a matter of course.

As has been noted, the present governing instruction makes ambiguous reference to the feedback function which most performance evaluations should perform. There is no obligation to discuss an officer's evaluation with him until his own or his reporting officer's detachment from the command. The need for feedback is a constantly expressed one throughout

the literature on motivation. [Porter et al:318; Frolich:90; Cherrington:44; Leonard:34; McClelland:55]

The present situation gives rise to potential conflict between the need for feedback and the need to be marked well on the fitness report. There is a natural tendency to present one's self in the best light for competitive purposes; however, this reduces the probability that the rater will observe the behaviors about which the individual ratee needs to receive the feedback required for the ratee's growth and development.

Since very little emphasis is given to feedback in the basic fitness report instruction, any one doing it on his own initiative and using the fitness report to do it, runs the risk of damaging his officers' careers. [Moore and Trout:456] Thus, the easiest tendency to follow is to disregard this step entirely or to provide the feedback "unofficially" by means of the appraisal worksheet (NAVPERS 1611/1(w) (Revised 2-77)), thereby possibly diluting its impact. This situation lowers the potential usefulness of the system as a means for officer development. Well-intentioned Commanding Officers can rationalize that their junior officers are graded high because they have done as well as could be expected of an Ensign/Lieutenant (Junior Grade). [BUPERS Inst. 1611.12E] Unwittingly, they may be setting the officer's expectations for future evaluations (i.e., a less than top performance evaluation is an indication of rater dissatisfaction or ratee failure). It would appear, then, that for various reasons, the current officer evaluation method is not particularly supportive of junior officer personal and career development.

### C. THE NEED FOR EARLY CAREER DEVELOPMENT

"To some people, career development implies that someone is going to do something else to make that second someone grow and flourish. But that would be somewhat like the novice gardener who tries to make his young tomato plants grow fast and straight up the pole by pulling on them from the top. At best, nothing happens. At worst, given enough pressure, the plant is uprooted and withers.

The only hope for successful growth and career development is to provide a nurturing environment in which the individual can, by working hard, take maximum advantage of his inherent potential. "Working hard" and "inherent potential" are important phrases here. The first because no true growth can occur without effort, and the second because no amount of nurturing can grow a tomato from a weed.

Another common myth associated with career development programs is that one chooses, or has chosen for him a specific position as a career goal and then follows clearly defined steps to reach that goal. Even if someone possessed the omniscience to make such a determination, the facts are that:

1. People change as they develop. New desires, interests, and abilities are created which may make the predetermined position an inappropriate goal.
2. Organizations also change over time, so that the position itself may become non-existent.

Keeping these facts in mind, it becomes evident that any system designed to enhance the career development of individuals must be dynamic. It must be capable of responding

to change. It cannot exist as a separate entity, but must be an integral part of the business organism in order to take advantage of all avenues of development as they open up." [Palmer:398-399] Such an attitude in the business world must be framed in terms of return on investment to the company. [Palmer:399]

A "nurturing environment" is established with the objective of providing a situation conducive to growth and development. Contributing factors to such a situation can be seen in some presently accepted theories of motivation. A motive has been defined as anything that initiates behavior. [Lindzey:399] Of particular interest to the discussion of motivation in a nurturing environment are the motivation categories of learned drives and incentives.

Of the numerous learned drives (or learned incitements to action) identified by psychologists, three motives are most worthy of discussion:

#### The Approval Motive

Developed from an early age and continuing through adolescence, people actively seek praise. The concern about approval exists to a lesser degree in adults; however, it is still there. Because of the importance of this drive for approval and esteem, the giving and withholding of approval is regularly used to control behavior [Lindzey:354]

#### The Achievement Motive

This motive has been one of the most extensively studied of all motives. Achievement behavior can manifest itself in all walks of life although the most extensively

studied area has been economic productivity. A characteristic of the achievement oriented person is his diligence in application to increasingly difficult and challenging tasks. He will set more rigorous goals and expect more in return. The achievement motivation is present in all of us but to varying degrees. A stimulating environment also helps to develop a generalized orientation to achievement. [Lindzey:356-357]

David C. McClelland and J. W. Atkinson and their associates, in laboratory studies conducted between 1958 and 1966 concluded that a strong positive relation exists between high need for achievement and high levels of performance and executive success. [Steers and Porter:48-49]

#### Task Motivation

A task with a specific, predictable end can arouse a drive to complete it once begun. The drive to finish the task becomes stronger as one approaches completion. There is also evidence that indicates uncompleted tasks are better remembered than completed ones, suggesting that the drive to complete has a persisting effect. [Lindzey:357] A common problem in organizations is to tie the task goals of the individual to broader, less defined goals of the organization. [Steers and Porter:448]

Incentives are an external inducement to some form of action. Incentives can be facilitative or coercive depending on whether they help a person satisfy needs and realize his potential, or impose behavior alien to needs and potential. Incentives often have short term effects and can lose their power to influence behavior after awhile, giving way to

adaptation. Some behaviors established by incentives can acquire their own drive-like character (such as a need for money, freedom, security, praise or approval) but which behaviors will become drives is not predictable. [Lindzey:362]

In motivation theory, incentives are defined in terms of anticipatory reactions to future goals. One hypothesis is that incentives contribute to motivation as the size of or attraction to future potential rewards varies, so does the motivation. [Steers and Porter:13]

One among several concepts of learned drives is conditioning, which acknowledges the existence of only a few basic drives, each of which can be satisfied in many different ways. The theory states that a person learns behaviors that satisfy these few basic drives because of reinforcers he receives for engaging in that behavior, such as the seeking of power because he has learned that the exercise of power will bring various material rewards. This theory is favored by many psychologists because of its compatibility with modern learning theory. [Lindzey:351] It has been largely neglected in the areas of management and organizational behavior until recently. [Cherrington:35] It was suggested that "the principles of operant conditioning and reinforcement can be meaningfully applied to performance standards, processes of budgeting, and performance appraisals in order to predict and control attitudes and behavior." [Cherrington:35] In a laboratory study using 930 undergraduates, significantly higher measures of both performance and satisfaction were obtained under conditions which approximated appropriate

reinforcement. [Cherrington:38] The implication is that by establishing the proper atmosphere and by defining objectives, performance can be improved and more objectively evaluated.

With this information on motivation as background, let us look at the career development plan of one organization. An International Business Machine (IBM) corporation plan for young executives defines three general categories of activity which can be planned to stimulate individual development: the work experience itself, specific skill development and training, and general activity. [Palmer:404]

a. Work experience. The working place must provide the basis for elementary career development. It is here where he must demonstrate satisfactory performance and indicate potential for significant additional growth. IBM utilizes several concepts to nurture development of their junior executives, notably rotation to other assignments in order to broaden experience, the use of these individuals as members on intracompany task forces organized to address particular management problems, and the identification of promising non-management personnel who then follow a highly structured on-the-job training program designed to stimulate management experience. [Palmer:405] (These processes relate closely to U.S. Navy policies as discussed in Chapter III, Paragraph D.) As a basis for individual identification and evaluation, the program uses an objective oriented approach, determining individual developmental objectives as well as expectations of outcome of each assignment. These objectives are reviewed upon completion of the assignment. [Palmer:404]

b. Skill Development. This is accomplished by basic managerial training and the growth of special skills. "Programs dealing with the specific operating and business requirements of the organizations are conducted as well as more generalized skills oriented sessions, such as those using videotape techniques to improve presentation and public speaking capabilities. [Palmer:405] (Again, a strong similarity will be seen in U.S. Navy training programs.)

c. General Education. In this category of development the individual is exposed to a broad spectrum of knowledge, not necessarily job related. The management objective here is for long term payoff in terms of improved management capabilities. The feeling is that such education broadens a person's outlook and promotes flexibility in his thinking, so that his approach to situations is not just a stereotype of his past experiences. [Palmer:406]

As will be shown, all three of the career development steps described above closely parallel U.S. Navy junior officer career paths with one noteable exception: the system described above is more closely tied to an objectives approach to identification and evaluation of the executive.

#### D. MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES

The objectives approach to evaluations is a motivational technique and is a part of a process known as Management By Objectives (MBO).<sup>1</sup> MBO, popularized in 1954 by Peter F. Drucker

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<sup>1</sup>Other areas of legitimate concern of MBO are planning, control, and compensation. [Lasagna:64]

in his book, The Practice of Management, centers on the assessment of performance by contrasting it to established goals. [Thompson and Dalton:156] The objective focused appraisal system offers some distinct advantages:

1. It accounts for a man's individual tasks and objectives, enabling him to experience success on that basis and not in a rough comparison with someone else.
2. It eliminates the accusation of subjectivity, often levied against the rater in the more conventional task oriented evaluations.
3. It is future oriented, tending to focus attention on forthcoming performance rather than on past failures. Rather, the past is used more for identifying needs for future improvement.
4. It is an open, non-zero sum system. The possibility exists for all employees to experience success as opposed to only the top few.
5. It is flexible. Whereas the design of many peer-comparison systems actually reduce the freedom of the supervisor by establishing an order of merit, objective focused systems allow the setting of mutually agreed on goals and development of the subordinates abilities on a more individualized basis. The supervisor is allowed more latitude and opportunity to use his own judgment. [Thompson and Dalton:156-157]
6. Effective objectives encourage all to work toward the same organizational objectives. Good objectives make behavior in organizations more rational, more coordinated, and thus more effective, because everyone knows the accepted goals to work toward. [Hicks:60]

7. Effective objectives also can be good motivators because they make it easier for a member to relate his personal goal accomplishment to the work of the organization. He knows what is expected of him and is thereby more secure in what he needs to do to be successful in the organization. [Hicks:60]

An editorial on, "The Trend Toward Goal Setting," in Management of Personnel Quarterly gives an idea of the attitudes of some companies toward goal oriented performance:

What is new - what is an emerging trend - is the systematic way managers are now applying the results oriented approach to their operations. It has many applications. Perhaps the most apparent impact has been on personality-based appraisals; many of them have been overthrown by those which focus on performance - on results. This single application in itself is revolutionary, truly an emerging trend. More importantly, the general concept underlying this application is being adopted throughout organizations to tie together the activities of each functional unit, thus fulfilling the firm's over-all goals more effectively and more efficiently.

It is therefore essential that the job of every managerial and professional member of the organization be defined in terms of the contribution it should make to the attainment of the company's economic results. To define a job in terms of work and skill is adequate for people whose contribution is only faithful effort. For people who have to have knowledge and judgment, self direction, and the 'excitement' that motivates, the emphasis has to be on contribution and results. [Drucker:222-223]

The installation of an MBO system can prove to be difficult however. Often a company has difficulty implementing the program for several reasons:

1. The program approach implies a company-wide system. Quite often, the administrative machinery of forms, instruction

manuals, checkpoints, etc., will cause a focusing on the system to the detriment of its actual objective; the people who use it.

2. The roots of an "establishment" can be difficult to change and not amendable to new approaches.

3. MBO should be designed as a developmental process, however practical evaluation is often viewed as an administrative function. [Lasagna:64-65]

Therefore it is important to be mindful that MBO is a means to an end and not an end in itself. Hughes points out however, that, "without company objectives clearly determined, employee goal setting is impossible, because performance preview is a function of personal and company goal interaction." [Hughes:335]

Hughes cites other factors that must be considered when implementing an MBO program.

1. That the meaningfulness with which a supervisor performs the goal setting function with his subordinates often depends on how well he sets goals for himself.

2. That both task oriented and goal oriented performance appraisals are not motivating in and of themselves, but more in keeping with the extent that goals of the job and the individual are mutually satisfied.

3. That supervisory and non-supervisory preference for conventional evaluations is inverse to their successes in goal setting. [Hughes:336]

The interaction of the individual with the organization forms the basis of MBO. The facilitator in this approach must logically be the supervisor, who as the organizations'

representative must marry company needs to the motivational and developmental needs of the individual. The normally accepted framework in which this is performed is by counseling and feedback. [Frolich:94] The purposes of counseling have been defined as follows:

1. Getting a person to do better.
2. Giving him an idea of how he is performing.
3. Discussing plans for improvement.
4. Building strong personal relationships between the counselor and counseled parties.
5. Eliminating or reducing anxieties from the working place. [Plant:386]

Thompson and Dalton define and organize the expectations of an evaluation feedback system in the following manner: "The process is expected by various members of the organization to fulfill a variety of functions:

1. Top management wants a system which will motivate high performers to do even better and low performers to improve.
2. Managers want a system which will identify those with high potential for advancement and those who are consistently low performers so that they may be encouraged to leave.
3. Managers and personnel people want accurate and complete information for making decisions on salary increases, promotions, transfers, and so forth.
4. Supervisors want an objective rating system to justify salary increases and to motivate their subordinates.
5. Subordinates want to know how they are viewed by their supervisors and what the future holds for the organization. [Thompson and Dalton:151]

The coaching role the supervisor was supposed to assume in the goal setting and review session became a charade, not only did both parties know that the supervisor was soon to reenter with his 'judges' hat on, but they also knew that the judging was to be a comparative ranking. In view of this, the goal setting session became only a ballet of careful sparring in anticipation of the announcement of the employee's ranking." [Thompson and Dalton:157]

Assuming that peer comparison could be removed from the feedback apparatus, then counseling would have the opportunity to play a larger role. Counseling can have a salutary effect on the supervisor-employee relationship. "In a supervisor-employee relationship, counseling is the best means of developing the sort of relationship that fosters lasting, effective employee development. Counseling provides an opportunity for the employee to understand himself better and to show the problems or obstacles that might be getting in the way of his future progress. It also provides an opportunity for the supervisor to learn to know and understand the employee better, to see that he is not really what he might be apt to label him but rather a person in the process of becoming something different and better." [Leonard:34] On the negative side, any criticism, a possible ingredient of counseling, can be counter productive. This may be illustrated by some findings of a study conducted at General Electric:

1. Criticism had a negative effect on achievement of goals.

2. The average subordinate reacted defensively to criticism.

3. Defensiveness resulting from critical appraisal produced inferior performance. [Meyer et al:123]

Counseling is sometimes held to have no place in a performance appraisal system: "...the place for such objective measurement is not within the framework of a Performance Counseling Program. Except in special cases, such objective measurement should be confined to being an unpublicized tool of management, one that is used in the administration of salaries and the promotion policy." [Frolich:92]

#### E. THE ASSESSMENT CENTER

Assessment centers have been in use in American industry for over two decades. Several large companies are noted for having employed the technique; AT&T, Sears, IBM, General Electric, J. C. Penney, and Standard Oil of Ohio, to name a few. [Slevin:255] The following is a description of a typical assessment center: "In these centers, specially trained managers (and occasionally psychologists) act as 'assessors' who evaluate candidates for promotion--either into management or within management--on their potential and their areas of weakness. Groups of men pass through series of standardized exercises such as management games, in-basket-tests, and leaderless discussion sessions, while assessors observe their behavior closely.

The assessors discuss each candidate's performance separately and then generate a comprehensive report on each candidate which management can combine with current performance information as it sees fit. As well as identifying the men most likely to succeed, the assessment reports spell out the individual deficiencies of each candidate and suggest guidelines for management to use in developing him." [Byham:151]

To date, over 70,000 individuals have been evaluated in assessment centers in the United States. The trend seems to indicate continued growth and expansion of the application of the concept. [McGann:12] While assessment centers increasingly gain in popularity in American industry, little interest has been shown by the American military. (The U.S. Army being one exception.) Ironically, several allied armed forces have assessment programs, notably the Germans and British, the Australian Army and the Israeli Armed Forces. [Allen:15]

An assessment center was originally thought of as a full time program administered at a particular location; however, this has since been liberalized to describe the situation rather than the location, referring more to the application of the assessment methodology. [Bender:51] Programs vary in length from one day to six weeks, with the normal duration considered closer to five days, consisting of two and one half days of evaluation and report writing by the assessors. [Business Week 34]

Assessments have been made on variables numbering from ten to fifty two. The following are considered the most common: "(a) Leadership, (b) Organizing and Planning, (c) Decision

Making, (d) Oral and Written Communication Skills, (e) Initiative, (f) Energy, (g) Analytical Ability, (h) Resistance to Stress, (i) Use of Delegation, (j) Behavior Flexibility, (k) Human Relations Competence, (l) Originality, (m) Controlling, (n) Self Direction, and (o) Overall Potential." [Howard:119] Through evaluation of these variables, the basic objectives (selection, development, placement or research) can best be achieved. [Allen:16]

Typical activities in an assessment program would include group problem solving and management games, oral presentations, group discussions, individual tests, interviews, self ratings, and peer ratings. [McCormick and Tiffin:205] For example, AT&T uses the following information gathering techniques:

1. Interviews (Giving and Receiving).
2. In-Basket Tests, consisting of notes, memos, and letters typical of the position for which the candidate is being interviewed.
3. A manufacturing problem (a management game, in which the participants assume the roles of partners in an enterprise).
4. Group discussion (a leaderless group situation focused around a management personnel function. The evaluatees are assigned differing points of view which they must defend and on which their individual performances are rank-ordered.)
5. Projective personality tests such as sentence completion and adjective comparison:
  - a. Paper and Pencil Tests and Questionnaires.
  - b. Personal History Questionnaires.
  - c. Autobiographical Essay. [Bray and Grant:3]

The desirability of assessment centers is best expressed by Ginsburg and Silverman: "Compared to other forms of personnel appraisal, this method is seen to be more effective because all assessees: (1) have an equal opportunity to display their talents, (2) are seen under similar conditions in relevant situations designed to bring out the particular skills and abilities needed for the position or positions for which they are being considered, and (3) are evaluated by a team of trained assessors, unbiased by past association, who are intimately familiar with both the position requirements and the institutional climate....The major contribution of the multiple assessment approach has been the use of situational tests or exercises....The application of situational techniques to assessment has reduced the amount of inferences which must be made from the more loosely structured paper and pencil techniques. They provide more positive answers to the question, 'Given these traits, how is he likely to behave in a work situation?'....Situational methods also offer the potential of adding greatly to the scope of human characteristics which can be evaluated. Although more expensive and time-consuming to administer than the usual appraisal procedures, the need to find ways of evaluating characteristics not covered by the latter is sufficient to warrant extensive experimentation with relatively elaborate techniques....All in all, the centers do seem to be predictive of managerial ability. Furthermore, a vital part of the identification and development center is the action which will be taken to increase individual effectiveness. Tailored developmental programs will replace shotgun

attempts at training individuals for increased responsibility."  
[Ginsburg and Silverman:666]

Byham makes another point: "This facet is commonly referred to as 'combating the Peter Principle'; since the candidate is evaluated on requirements of the position he is aspiring to--not those he has held in the past. When there is a large difference between these requirements--e.g., promotion from crafts to first line management--this factor becomes very significant."  
[Byham:159] Also, "in a survey of the 20 companies that operated centers, I uncovered some 22 studies in all that showed assessment more effective than other approaches and only one that showed it exactly as effective as some other approaches. None showed it less effective. As I suggested before, these studies exhibit correlations between center predictions and achievement criteria such as advancement, salary grade, and performance ratings that range as high as .64. The companies appear satisfied that they are on the right track."  
[Byham:160]

Assessment centers also have implications regarding bias in selection practices: "Insofar as the assessment center technique is strictly job related, employing exercises which seek to maximize objectivity, and further, since the concept has never been challenged by EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) advocates, promoters of the concept may be encouraged."  
[Pomerlau:439]

There are several feared shortcomings which are, for the most part, unsubstantiated. One common concern is the cost associated with the assessment center: "estimates of costs have ranged from the price of a few meals to \$5000 per candidate,

exclusive of staff salary--installation costs, but to these must be added assessors', assessee's, and psychologists' time, travel, accommodations, and meals, plus materials, from rating sheets to videotapes. Various cost saving devices might include completing all possible procedures before arrival at the center, conducting exercises on company property over weekends, and combining small companies with similar jobs in a multiple company center, perhaps in a synthetic validity paradigm. In the end, these costs must be weighed in the context of current selection ratios against the possible gains in selection and training in some kind of a utility model."<sup>[Howard:130]</sup> He also points out some associated behavioral problems:

1. The Crown Prince or Princess. Where success in the assessment center can influence a person's treatment by management so much that any future successes are a self-fulfilling prophecy.
2. The Kiss of Death. Whereby a candidate doing poorly in an assessment evaluation feels that he has no future with the company.
3. Stress. The idea that an entire career is at stake in the several day assessment can increase the pressures on the individual. It is also pointed out that coping with stress can be a test in itself.
4. The Non-Nominee. An individual not selected to participate in the assessment process might feel left out. The process runs the danger of becoming a status symbol.

5. The Organization Man. There is some indication that supervisors may nominate those higher on conformity and lower on independence. This would appear to be a fault of the nomination process rather than the assessment center, however. [Howard:133]

Whereas these possible negative outcomes appear reasonable, there seem to be no data indicating these outcomes actually occurring. They lack substantiating data.

#### F. DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PLANS

In an article "Some Issues in Performance Appraisal" by Ishwar Dayal, he observes that there are three sets of issues in developing performance appraisal plans:

"1. The system must give knowledge about performance in discrete and recognizable areas of the performer's task.

2. A personal equation between the evaluator and the evaluatee must be developed to achieve mutual understanding of the criteria of evaluation.

3. Another area has to do with the inner conflicts and anxieties that accompany the role of a judge in our social system. For example, often the union supports its members when they feel a mistake is made; or the manager's own frustrations with the organization, provides a fertile ground to rationalize and to displace his anxiety as a judge." [Dayal:30]

These observations will be heeded in the development of the new system proposed in the next chapter of this thesis. The junior officer situation and how management by objectives can provide meaningful improvement to the evaluation process

will be discussed, shortcomings of the present form in evaluating middle management and improvements recommended, and finally, the need for assessment centers in the senior ranks will be argued.

### III. THE PHASING APPROACH

In this chapter an alternative approach to the present U.S. Navy Fitness Report is discussed. Problems with the fitness report will be cited. The organization of the U.S. Coast Guard Fitness Reporting System and its experiences with a phasing approach will be related. A discussion of current factors which influence officer upward mobility will be provided and compared to a phased approach of evaluation. The various phases will be portrayed in the current line officer career environment, and recommendations for change will be made.

#### A. DIFFICULTIES WITH A SINGLE SYSTEM

As discussed in the previous chapters this thesis argues that the present U.S. Navy Fitness Reporting System has several shortcomings, notably:

1. It is often subjective in nature and does not emphasize accomplishment.
2. The need for feedback is given little attention and counseling is not presently conducted in a beneficial atmosphere.
3. The present form is subjected to many of the common failings of performance appraisal such as rater bias, leniency, halo effects, etc.
4. That grade inflation, another common failing, is a particularly difficult problem in the military.

This is not to say that the system is completely unsatisfactory. Rather, it is less than optimal in its present form, and could be improved by recognizing that performance during different phases of officers' careers can best be evaluated by different methods. The Navy's objective of maintaining a high quality officer corps would continue to be served. As it will be shown, there are times when different forms of evaluation best serve both the needs of the individual and the organization. "Any system designed to enhance the career development must be dynamic." [Palmer:399] The Navy's present reliance on one form restricts the opportunity for dynamic development which a combined use of evaluating techniques can provide. Using the present Fitness Report form as a common thread, other evaluation procedures can serve a useful purpose at pertinent milestones in the officer career pattern, while concurrently satisfying administrative and managerial needs. The experience of one service is provided as a modest example.

#### B. THE U.S. COAST GUARD EVALUATION SYSTEM

A review of the evaluation systems of other services indicates that a phasing approach is not entirely new. A system in general similar to the one envisioned is currently in effect for the officer corps of the U.S. Coast Guard. The phases as organized by rank structure is equivalent, and the intent of each phase also roughly equates to the purpose this thesis envisions for the U.S. Navy. A most effective example is the special counseling program in the Coast Guard for Lieutenant

(junior grade) and below and for warrant officers with less than two years' commissioned service. Part of the counseling program requires that they be shown their fitness reports. U.S. Coast Guard Personnel Manual, Article 10-A-15 applies. Examples of the various Coast Guard Officer Fitness Reports are provided on ensuing pages. It can be noted that the performance of duties (Block 14) evaluation categories vary at each stage, reflecting stages of growth in the officer as well as criteria which are to be emphasized at the associated rank levels. This is further accentuated in Block 17, the Personal Qualities Phase, whereby the qualities remain the same, but the criteria by which those qualities are judged mature with rank. Other significant differences include no provision for ranking or for requiring recommendation for promotion.

In recent years the Coast Guard has also been afflicted with grade (rating) inflation. Commandant Instruction 1611.17 of 13 September 1978 cites several reasons for this trend:

1. Limited growth in the size of the Officer Corps and very little voluntary attrition has combined to make the promotion process increasingly competitive.
2. Evaluation systems tied to promotion and pay tend to create pressure on the evaluator to inflate subordinate's marks.
3. A lack of information has contributed to suspicion and mistrust in the Officer Corps in regard to the Fitness Reporting System.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION U. S. COAST GUARD CG-4328A (Rev. 3-72)	REPORT ON THE FITNESS OF LIEUTENANTS (JG) ENSIGNS AND THOSE CHIEF WARRANT OFFICERS WITH LESS THAN TWO YEARS SERVICE					REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL PO-5072
THE OFFICER REPORTED ON WILL COMPLETE THE FIRST TWELVE SECTIONS						
1. NAME (Last, First, Middle)		2. GRADE	3. YEARS IN GRADE	4. STATUS INDICATOR	5. SERVICE NO.	
6. UNIT NAME AND OFFICER NO.		7. DATE REPORTED PRESENT UNIT			8. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	
9. TYPE REPORT REGULAR <input type="checkbox"/> CONCURRENT <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL <input type="checkbox"/> SEMI-ANNUAL <input type="checkbox"/>		10. OCCASION FOR REGULAR REPORT DETACHMENT OF REPORTING OFFICER		DETACHMENT OF OFFICER	PROMOTION OF OFFICER	11. PERIOD OF REPORT FROM _____ TO _____
12. DUTIES (List primary duties first, add watches and collateral duties. Indicate, after each, time spent in months during the reporting period. If assignment involves duties not well established, give outline of purpose, scope and significance of such duties. If necessary, use separate sheet. Personal or official reports of possible use to the reporting officer in evaluating your performance may be attached but should not be referenced. Include all periods in a PCS travel status. See Personnel Manual, 10-A-10.)						
SIGNATURE OF OFFICER REPORTED ON						
FOLLOWING TO BE FILLED IN BY REPORTING OFFICER						
13. PERFORMANCE INFORMATION CONSIDERED IN COMPLETING THIS REPORT a. INFORMATION: Indicate for each method of appraisal used the quality of performance information considered in completing this report by marking an X in the appropriate marking box of each row.		QUALITY OF INFORMATION (Consider the frequency, relevancy, accuracy and scope of information.)				
(1) Direct personal observation of the officer reported on and his accomplishments.		VERY GOOD	GOOD	LIMITED	NO SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION	
(2) Indirect knowledge of officer reported on through written or oral reports.						
b. DOCUMENTATION: Append reports of outstanding or unsatisfactory performance and reference them in this space. Avoid extraneous material (See Personnel Manual 10-A-4.)						
14. c. PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES. (Consider his performance in comparison with other officers of similar length of service in his grade and evaluate him in the factors by marking an "X" in the appropriate box. O - OUTSTANDING, E - EXCELLENT, VG - VERY GOOD, S - GOOD, U - UNSATISFACTORY, D - NOT OBSERVED. Line out items if conditions do not provide an opportunity for significant performance.)						
1. Primary Duties		16. Considers ideas and suggestions of subordinates				
2. Collateral Duties		17. Keeps appropriate persons informed				
3. Watch Standing		18. Keeps accurate, up-to-date records				
4. Ship handling/armament		19. Takes share of undesirable duty				
5. Reaction to criticism or suggestions		20. Assumes responsibility in absence of superior				
6. Makes decisions		21. Works overtime when necessary				
7. Adjusts to new situations		22. Follows through and completes assignments				
8. Displays confidence		23. Teaches subordinates				
9. Gets along with peers		24. Corrects subordinates in a constructive manner				
10. Accepts responsibility for subordinates		25. Takes active interest in personal problems of subordinates				
11. Supports policies and actions of superiors		26. Praises subordinates when deserved				
12. Accepts responsibility for own work		27. Compromises under pressure				
13. Meets commitments		28. Withholds judgment until he has necessary facts				
14. Observes lines of authority, both up and down		29. Self development in skills and knowledge				
15. Schedules own and subordinates' work		30. Originates new methods and devices				
d. OVERALL PERFORMANCE. (In comparison with other officers with similar length of service in his grade, evaluate his overall performance.)						
NOT OBSERVED		OUTSTANDING	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	SATISFACTORY
9		8	7	6	5	4
TO MOST					3	2
BE PLEASED TO HAVE HIM					1	1
15. ATTITUDE (Indicate your attitude toward having this officer under your command.)		BE SATISFIED TO HAVE HIM				
PARTICULARLY DESIRE TO HAVE HIM		3				
PREFER HIM TO MOST		1				
ONE OF THE FEW OUTSTANDING OFFICERS I KNOW		PREFER NOT TO HAVE HIM (UNSATISFACTORY)				
A VERY FINE OFFICER OF GREAT VALUE TO THE SERVICE		A DEPENDABLE AND TYPICALLY EFFECTIVE OFFICER				
A. AN ACCEPTABLE OFFICER		B. UNSATISFACTORY				

Fig. 3. U.S. Coast Guard Report on the Fitness of Lieutenants (JG) and Ensigns

17. PERSONAL QUALITIES (In comparison with other officers with similar length of service in his grade, to what degree has this officer exhibited the following qualities?)	NOT OBSERVED	OUT-STANDING	EXCELLENT		VERY GOOD		GOOD		SATISFACTORY	
a. LEADERSHIP Ability to accomplish assigned tasks, functions and objectives by directing the efforts of others; ability to give and take orders and other forms of guidance; ability to gain the confidence of superiors and subordinates; integrity of purpose and character.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
b. HUMAN RELATIONS Ability to get along with others with whom he must work and live; ability to maintain proper relations when dealing with subordinates and superiors, both military and civilian; willingness to work with friends and work with others; ability to use sources of authority such as party officers; ability to deal with personnel problems and keep morale high; ability to deal authoritatively but courteously with the public; ability to lead in a humane, cooperative and morally responsible manner.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
c. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE Knowledge of the service; knowledge required to perform his duties and to support the command to which he is assigned; knowledge of his professional subjects; knowledge of other subjects of value to performance as a Coast Guard officer; scope of general knowledge; depth of specific knowledge.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
d. JUDGMENT Ability to grasp a situation, think clearly, develop, analyze/interpret information, and arrive at reasonable conclusions of practical significance in solving complex problems.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
e. FORCE Proper control of positive motivation; moral courage; loyalty to superiors and subordinates; loyalty to service and country; ability to take initiative; courage of his convictions but willingness to abide by and live with official decisions that run counter to his own, i.e., willingness to observe lines of authority.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
f. INITIATIVE Motivated to make his unit and the Coast Guard the best possible by finding worthwhile application for ideas, innovations and new developments; motivated to increase his professional knowledge and to do the best job he can; willingness to sacrifice, if necessary.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
g. Overall evaluation of personal qualities. Composite of a. through f.	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
h. Experienced distribution of marks in item g.		5%	15%	15%	35%	20%	5%	3%	2%	

18. COMMENTS. (In this section a general appraisal of the officer should be developed which will integrate and round out the evaluation made elsewhere in this form. Indicate accomplishments including original and constructive professional work.)

19. What has been the trend of his performance since your last report?					
FIRST REPORT <input type="checkbox"/>		IMPROVING <input type="checkbox"/>		STEADY <input type="checkbox"/>	
DECLINING <input type="checkbox"/>					
20. If any unsatisfactory mark or written comment of unsatisfactory performance is included in this report, check here. <input type="checkbox"/> If so, it must be referred to the officer reported on for written comment and his comments attached to this report.					
OFFICER	DATE	SIGNATURE	GRADE	SERVICE NO./SSN	TITLE OF POSITION
21. PREPARING					
22. REPORTING					
23. REVIEWING					
CONCUR <input type="checkbox"/>		COMPLETENESS ONLY <input type="checkbox"/>		COMMENTS ATTACHED <input type="checkbox"/>	

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION U. S. COAST GUARD CG-4328B (Rev. 3-72)		REPORT ON THE FITNESS OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDERS, LIEUTENANTS AND CHIEF WARRANT OFFICERS WITH MORE THAN TWO YEARS SERVICE					REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL PO-1672			
THE OFFICER REPORTED ON WILL COMPLETE THE FIRST TWELVE SECTIONS										
1. NAME (Last, First, Middle)			2. GRADE	3. YEARS IN GRADE	4. STATUS INDICATOR	5. SERVICE NO.				
6. UNIT NAME AND OFFICER NO.			7. DATE REPORTED PRESENT UNIT			8. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.				
9. TYPE REPORT SPECIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONCURRENT <input type="checkbox"/>		10. OCCASION FOR REGULAR REPORT SEMI-ANNUAL <input type="checkbox"/> DETACHMENT OF REPORTG. OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> DETACHMENT OF OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/>		11. PERIOD OF REPORT PROMOTION OF OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> FROM <input type="checkbox"/> TO						
<b>12. DUTIES</b> (List primary duties first, add watches and collateral duties. Indicate, after each, time spent in months during the reporting period. If assignment involves duties not well established, give outline of purpose, scope and significance of such duties. If necessary, use separate sheet. Personal or official reports of possible use to the reporting officer in evaluating your performance may be attached but should not be referenced. Include all periods in a PCS travel status. See Personnel Manual 10-A-10.)										
SIGNATURE OF OFFICER REPORTED ON										
FOLLOWING TO BE FILLED IN BY REPORTING OFFICER										
<b>13. PERFORMANCE INFORMATION CONSIDERED IN COMPLETING THIS REPORT</b> a. INFORMATION: Indicate for each method of appraisal used the quality of performance information considered in completing this report by marking an X in the appropriate marking box of each row.					QUALITY OF INFORMATION (Consider the frequency, relevancy, accuracy and scope of information.)					
					VERY GOOD	GOOD	LIMITED	NO SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION		
(1) Direct personal observation of the officer reported on and his accomplishments.										
(2) Indirect knowledge of officer reported on through written or oral reports.										
b. DOCUMENTATION: Append reports of outstanding or unsatisfactory performance and reference them in this space. Avoid extraneous material. (See Personnel Manual 10-A-4.)										
<b>14. PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES.</b> (In comparison with other officers with similar length of service in his grade, consider the requirements of his position and evaluate his performance.)										
PERFORMANCE FACTORS		NOT OBSERVED	OUT-STANDING PERFORMANCE	EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN MOST ASPECTS OF HIS POSITION. FREQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE. WELL QUALIFIED TO FILL POSITIONS OF HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY.	VERY GOOD PERFORMANCE IN MOST ASPECTS OF HIS POSITION. FREQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE. HIGHLY QUALIFIED FOR HIS PRESENT POSITION.	GOOD PERFORMANCE IN MOST ASPECTS OF HIS POSITION. FREQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES VERY GOOD PERFORMANCE.	SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE	UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE		
				9	8	7	6	5	4	3
a. Primary Duty										
b. Specialty <input type="checkbox"/> Subspecialty <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
c. Collateral Duties specified in Section 12, above		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
d. Management Effectiveness (Use of men, money and materials)		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
e. Ability to speak		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
f. Ability to write		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
g. Overall performance (Composite of items a. thru f.)		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
h. Experienced distribution of marks in g.		10%	25%	30%	25%	5%	3%	1%	1%	
<b>15. ATTITUDE</b> (Indicate your attitude toward having this officer under your command.) PARTICULARLY DESIRE TO HAVE HIM <input type="checkbox"/> PREFER HIM TO MOST <input type="checkbox"/> BE PLEASED TO HAVE HIM <input type="checkbox"/> BE SATISFIED TO HAVE HIM <input type="checkbox"/> PREFER NOT TO HAVE HIM (UNSATISFACTORY) <input type="checkbox"/>										
<b>COMPARISON</b> (In comparison with other officers of his grade how would you designate this officer?) ONE OF THE FEW HIGHLY OUTSTANDING OFFICERS I KNOW <input type="checkbox"/> A VERY FINE OFFICER OF GREAT VALUE TO THE SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> A DEPENDABLE AND TYPICALLY EFFECTIVE OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> AN ACCEPTABLE OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/>										

Fig. 4. U.S. Coast Guard Report on the Fitness of Lieutenant Commanders and Lieutenants

17. PERSONAL QUALITIES (In comparison with other officers with similar length of service in his grade, to what degree has this officer exhibited the following qualities?)		HOT OBSERVED	OUT-STANDING	EXCELLENT		VERY GOOD		GOOD		SATIS-FAC-TORY	UNSATIS-FAC-TORY	
a. LEADERSHIP Ability to accomplish assigned missions, tasks and objectives; ability to supervise and control operations; the appropriate assignment and coordination of human and material resources, priorities and emphasis of effort; ability to make or withhold decisions as appropriate under varying circumstances; integrity of purpose and character; ability to inspire confidence; ability to recognize and carry out his equal opportunity responsibilities.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
b. HUMAN RELATIONS Ability to cooperate and establish good relations with his superiors, subordinates, peers and civilians with whom he must work and live; ability to lead in a humane, impartial, cooperative, and morally responsible manner; ability to teach and help subordinates develop their full potential; ability to give appropriate rewards or discipline to subordinates; ability to keep morale high.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
c. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE Knowledge of the service; knowledge of his specialty and its relative knowledge of goals, missions, objectives and administration of the command to which he is assigned; knowledge of local government and various organizations with which he may have to deal.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
d. JUDGMENT Ability to use his knowledge and training in solving both technical and practical problems; ability to distinguish between problems which require exact and unique solutions and those problems which can be solved with approximate solutions; or which have multiple solutions; ability to distinguish between problems whose solutions are primarily based on ethical or traditional criteria versus technical or more objective criteria.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
e. FORCE Proper control of positive motivation, moral courage, loyalty to superiors and subordinates; loyalty to service and country; ability to take initiative; courage of his convictions but willingness to abide by and live with official decisions that run counter to his own.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
f. INITIATIVE Motivated to make his unit and the Coast Guard the best possible; ability to adapting and implementing worthwhile ideas, innovations and new developments, especially in his specialty area. Strives to engender, in his subordinates, qualities of initiative and a willingness to accept change.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
g. Overall evaluation of personal qualities. Composite of a. through f.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
h. Experienced distribution of marks in Item g.		10%	25%	30%	25%	5%	2%	2%	1%			
18. COMMENTS (In this section a general appraisal of the officer should be developed which will integrate and round out the evaluation made elsewhere on this form. Indicate any notable accomplishments including original and creative professional work.)												
19. What has been the trend of his performance since your last report?												
FIRST REPORT <input type="checkbox"/>		IMPROVING <input type="checkbox"/>		STEADY <input type="checkbox"/>		DECLINING <input type="checkbox"/>						
20. If any unsatisfactory mark or written comment of unsatisfactory performance is included in this report, check here. <input type="checkbox"/> If so, it must be referred to the officer reported on for written comment and his comments attached to this report.												
OFFICER	DATE	SIGNATURE	GRADE	SERVICE NO./SSN		TITLE OF POSITION						
21. PREPARING												
22. REPORTING												
23. REVIEWING												
CONCUR <input type="checkbox"/>		COMPLETENESS ONLY <input type="checkbox"/>				COMMENTS ATTACHED <input type="checkbox"/>						

U.S. G.P.O. 1972-472-680

1619 600 673

Fig. 4. (Cont'd)

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION U. S. COAST GUARD CG-4328C (Rev. 10-78)	REPORT ON THE FITNESS OF CAPTAINS AND COMMANDERS					REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL GPO-5072				
THE OFFICER REPORTED ON WILL COMPLETE THE FIRST TWELVE SECTIONS										
1. NAME (Last, First, Middle)		2. GRADE		3. YEARS IN GRADE		4. STATUS INDICATOR				
5. UNIT NAME AND OFFICER NO.		6. DATE REPORTED PRESENT UNIT		7. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.						
8. TYPE OF REPORT REGULAR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL <input type="checkbox"/> CONCURRENT <input type="checkbox"/> SEMI-ANNUAL <input type="checkbox"/>		9. OCCASION FOR REGULAR REPORT DETACHMENT OF REPTD. OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> DETACHMENT OF OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/>		10. PROMOTION OF OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/>		11. PERIOD OF REPORT FROM <input type="checkbox"/> TO <input type="checkbox"/>				
12. ASSIGNMENT: Provide a brief resume of your assignment during this reporting period. Personal or official reports of possible use to the reporting officer in evaluating your performance may be attached but should not be referenced. Include all periods in a PCS travel status. See Personnel Manual (O-A-10). Days on TAD <input type="checkbox"/> All other days not present for duty <input type="checkbox"/>										
SIGNATURE OF OFFICER REPORTED ON										
FOLLOWING TO BE FILLED IN BY REPORTING OFFICER										
13. PERFORMANCE INFORMATION CONSIDERED IN COMPLETING THIS REPORT a. INFORMATION: Indicate for each method of appraisal used the quality of performance information considered in completing this report by marking an X in the appropriate marking box of each row.				QUALITY OF INFORMATION Consider the frequency, relevancy, accuracy and scope of information.						
				VERY GOOD <input type="checkbox"/>	GOOD <input type="checkbox"/>	LIMITED <input type="checkbox"/>	NO SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION <input type="checkbox"/>			
(1) Direct personal observation of the officer reported on and his accomplishments.										
(2) Indirect knowledge of officer reported on through written or oral reports.										
b. DOCUMENTATION: Append reports of outstanding or unsatisfactory performance and reference them in this space. Avoid extraneous material. (See Personnel Manual (O-A-4).)										
14. PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES (In comparison with other officers with similar length of service in grade, consider the requirements of his position and evaluate his performance.)										
PERFORMANCE FACTORS		NOT OBSERVED	OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE, DEMONSTRATES UNUSUAL ABILITY TO FILL POSITIONS OF HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY. MOST HIGHLY QUALIFIED.	EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN MOST ASPECTS OF HIS POSITION. FREQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE. WELL QUALIFIED FOR ALL POSITIONS OF HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY.	VERY GOOD PERFORMANCE IN MOST ASPECTS OF HIS POSITION. FREQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE. HIGHLY QUALIFIED FOR HIS PRESENT POSITION.	GOOD PERFORMANCE IN MOST ASPECTS OF HIS POSITION. FREQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES VERY GOOD PERFORMANCE.	UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE			
a. Primary Duty		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
b. Management and Planning		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
c. Speaking Ability		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
d. Accomplishments		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
e. Government Inter-Service/ Public Relations		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
f. Overall Performance Composite of a, b, c, d, e.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
g. Desired distribution of marks in f.		25%	40%	20%	15%					
15. ATTITUDE (Indicate your attitude toward having this officer under your command.)										
PARTICULARLY DESIRE TO HAVE HIM		3 <input type="checkbox"/>	PREFER HIM TO MOST	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	BE PLEASED TO HAVE HIM	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	BE SATISFIED TO HAVE HIM	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	PREFER NOT TO HAVE HIM (UNSATISFACTORY)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
COMPARISON (In comparison with other officers of his grade, how would you designate this officer?)										
THE VERY BEST I KNOW		2 <input type="checkbox"/>	ONE OF THE FEW HIGHLY OUTSTANDING OFFICERS I KNOW	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	A VERY FINE OFFICER OF GREAT VALUE TO THE SERVICE	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	A DEPENDABLE AND TYPICALLY EFFECTIVE OFFICER	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	IS NOT QUALIFIED AT HIS LEVEL (UNSATISFACTORY)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>

Previous editions are obsolete

SN-7530-0-0-FOI-7140

Fig. 5. U.S. Coast Guard Report on the Fitness of Captains and Commanders

17. PERSONAL QUALITIES. In comparison with other officers with similar length of service in his grade, to what degree has this officer exhibited the following qualities?		NOT SERVED	OUTSTANDING	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	UNSATISFACTORY			
a. LEADERSHIP Ability to plan, direct and guide the development and operation of the service; ability to solve complex problems of highest management through proper use of staff and facilities.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
b. HUMAN RELATIONS Ability to establish good relations with the highest levels of national, local and service leadership; ability and poise in meeting social and ceremonial obligations; interest in the personal welfare and development of subordinates; interest in service policies and programs having to do with equal opportunity, individual welfare and development; ability to lead in a humane, cooperative and morally responsible manner.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
c. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE Knowledge of the service, its roles and missions; knowledge of the command to which he is assigned; knowledge of the service's relationship with international, national, state and local governments, other armed services and federal agencies, private industry and unions and with various other organizations with which he may have to deal.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
d. JUDGMENT Ability to recognize and select the important problems for action; ability to combine intelligence, knowledge, a sense of the possible and a sense of the practical in guiding the management of the service.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
e. FORCE Proper control of positive motivation, moral courage, loyalty to superiors and subordinates, loyalty to service and country; ability to take initiative, courage of his convictions but willingness to abide by and live with official decisions that run counter to his own.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
f. INITIATIVE Motivated to increase the Coast Guard's contributions to the nation by introducing and implementing worthwhile ideas, innovations and new developments, both his own and those of subordinates. Ability to follow through and control the direction rate and effect of actions which he has initiated.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
g. Overall evaluation of personal qualities Composite of a. through f.		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
h. Desired distribution of marks in item g.		25%	40%	20%	15%					
18. COMMENTS (In this section a general appraisal of the officer should be developed which will integrate and round out the evaluations made elsewhere on this form. Indicate any notable accomplishments including original and constructive professional work. A specific comment addressing the performance of EEO responsibilities is required in this section (See COMDTINST 5334.2 series).)										
19. I have marked this officer in accordance with the DESIRED distributions in sections 14g, add 17a. _____ Signature of Reporting Officer _____										
20. What has been the trend of his performance since your last report? FIRST REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPROVING <input type="checkbox"/> STEADY <input type="checkbox"/> DECLINING <input type="checkbox"/>										
21. If any unsatisfactory mark or written comment of unsatisfactory performance is included in this report, check here. <input type="checkbox"/> If so, it must be referred to the officer reported on for written comment and his comments attached to this report.										
OFFICER	DATE	SIGNATURE	GRADE	SERVICE NO./SSN	TITLE OF POSITION					
12. PREPARING										
13. REPORTING										
14. REVIEWING										
CONCUR <input type="checkbox"/>		COMPLETENESS ONLY <input type="checkbox"/>			COMMENTS ATTACHED <input type="checkbox"/>					

Fig. 5. (Cont'd)

4. The overall competence and performance level of officers in general may be at a higher level than in the past.

Whereas sub-item 14.h previously indicated an "experienced" distribution of the grading factors, the Commandant's Instruction cited the grade inflation experience by rank, has revised the forms to indicate that this is a "desired" distribution. Furthermore, the following statement is now required in the comments section (Item 18): "I have marked this officer in accordance with the new desired distribution for the grade of \_\_\_\_\_ as specified by COMTINST 1611.7." These reports are also now being reviewed by officers who will discuss with reporting officers any reports which appear inconsistent with the new desired distributions.

It should be kept in mind that the Coast Guard's evaluation method is facilitated by the size of its organization (approximately 4000 line officers, 1000 warrants, as cited in the Coast Guard Personnel Manual), a simpler organization consisting mainly of sea-going surface line officers, a small air arm considerably more basic in mission, equipment, and skills than the Navy's, and a very small staff corps. Moreover, with the exception of the rank of lieutenant, promotion opportunity is significantly better than in the Navy:

	<u>Coast Guard</u>	<u>Navy</u>
CAPT	84.3%	51.4%*
CDR	88.9%	67.4%
LCDR	88.2%	82.7%
LT	92.4%	94.6%

\*Based on 1977 statistics.

### C. THE APPLICATION OF PHASING EVALUATIONS TO THE U.S. NAVY

Despite the managerial difficulties implicit in multiple reports for a service with three major line communities and nine major staff corps, it is the investigator's opinion that the use of different performance evaluation procedures at different career stages, e.g., phasing, is an alternative that should be explored by the U.S. Navy. Research pertinent to this thesis indicates that this was the subject of a recommendation of the Lockwood-Maulden Report concerning the Navy's most recent major revision (1973) of the Fitness Report: "Aside from the continuing report for flag officers, we believe that separate reports should be developed for Ensigns and Lieutenants (Junior Grade), Lieutenants and Lieutenant Commanders, and Commanders and Captains. These groups correspond to those in the basic, intermediate, and advanced phases of operational and technical managerial career developmental cycles. The junior officer's form should be behaviorally-oriented, covering the specific skills necessary for effective performance. The middle-grade and senior officer's forms could be more general, management, and command oriented."

Although the idea is seemingly not original, there is little evidence that it has been explored at all. It is not surprising that careers have received little attention in the context of their phases or cycles, since social scientists have only recently explored this approach on the grander scale of man's life itself in such works as "The Seasons of a Man's Life" [Daniel Levinson et al] and "Passages" [Sheehy]

Levinson points out "When our work began, there was little theory and even less research evidence regarding adult phases in the life cycle and the nature of adult development." How apropos to the military officer career, where we have scrutinized virtually every segment and aspect of career development, yet have failed to step back and observe the interworking of all these elements in the macro-structure of a career. A life cycle view has implications in terms of career planning, development and counseling. For purposes of the paper, suffice it to say that the "cycle" approach to evaluating is worthy of considering from both a managerial as well as a (possible) psychological or morale standpoint.

An interesting view of the U.S. military officer career pattern is portrayed in an article by Moore and Trout titled "Military Advancement: The Visibility Theory of Promotion." The central argument is that, "Performance, while a necessary standard for acceptability into a rather large pool of officers from which the elite will emerge is nonetheless a minor influence on promotion and becomes even less discriminating as an officer's career progresses, whereas visibility, the extent to which an individual has developed contacts with peers and superiors who can influence his movement in the organization, begins moderately and eventually becomes the dominant influence." Their thesis is portrayed very well by means of promotion models for junior, senior and middle-grade officers (pages 70-72). While eight factors are considered of importance in these models, three are said to be most important: performance reports, visibility, and billets.

## JUNIOR OFFICER

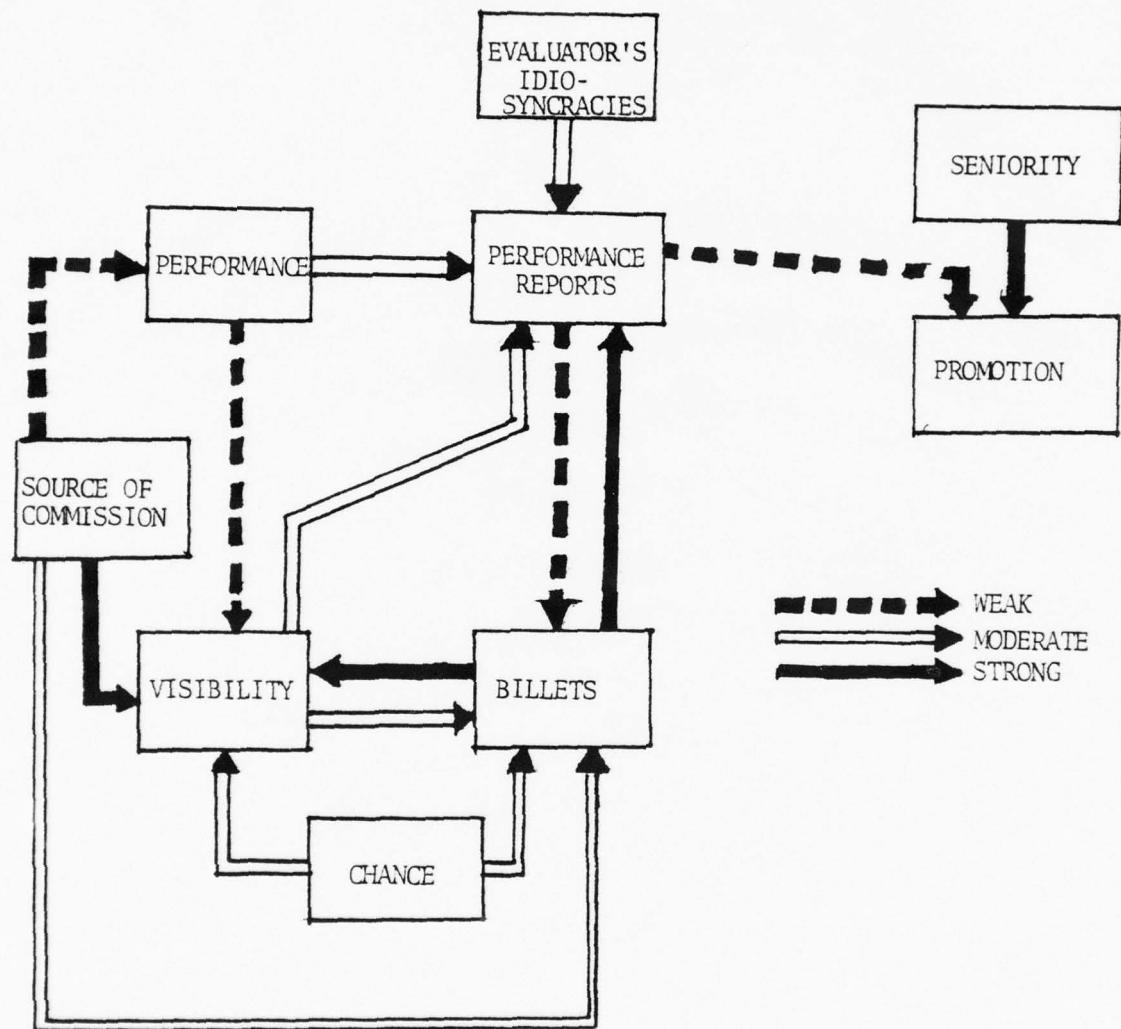


Fig. 6. Junior Officer Visibility Model<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Moore, David W., and Trout, B. Thomas, "Military Advancement: The Visibility Theory of Promotion," The American Political Science Review, 72, p. 456, Jun 1978.

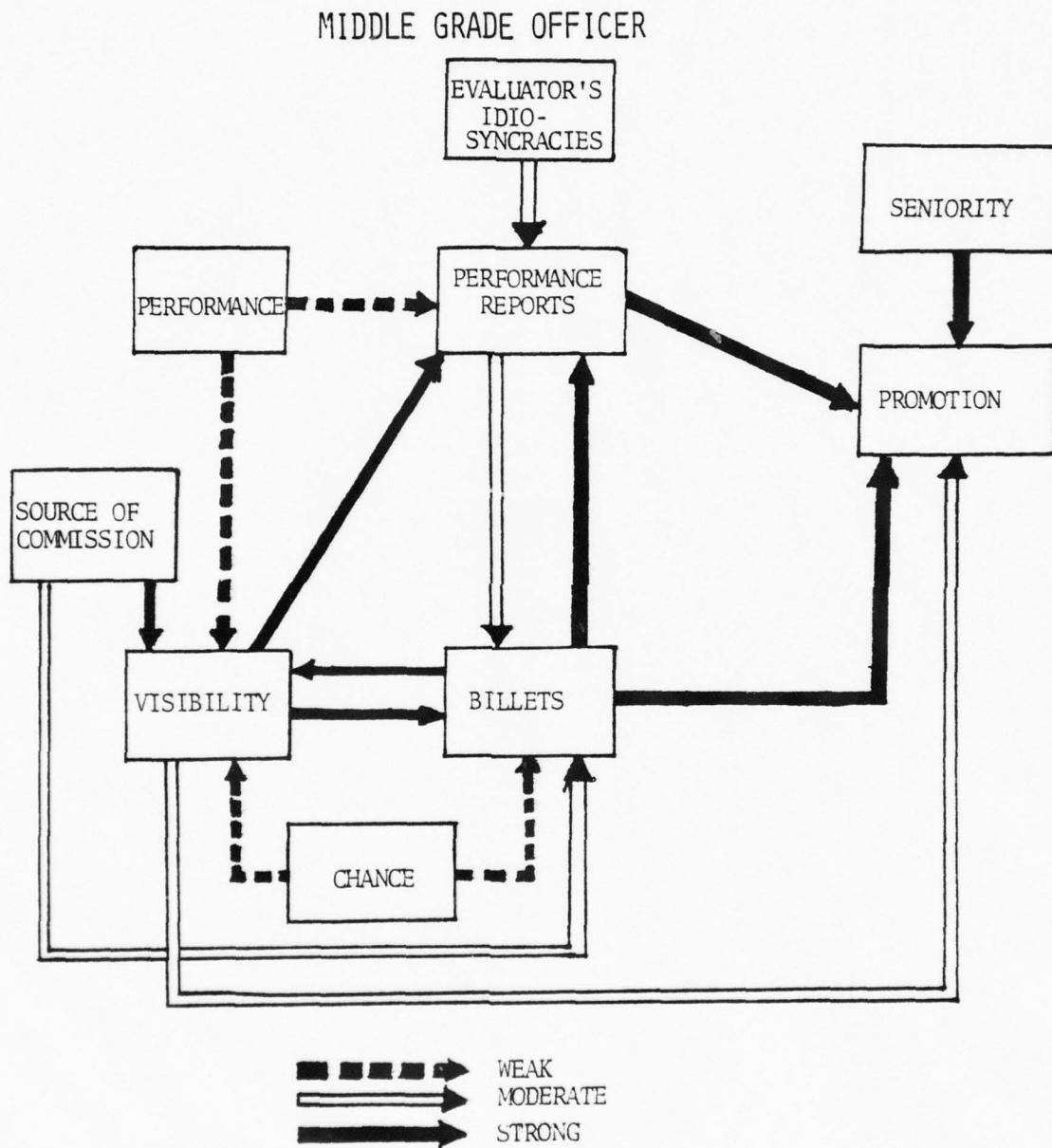


Fig. 7. Middle Grade Officer Visibility Model<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Moore, David W., and Trout, B. Thomas, "Military Advancement: The Visibility Theory of Promotion," The American Political Science Review, 72, p. 458, Jun 1978.

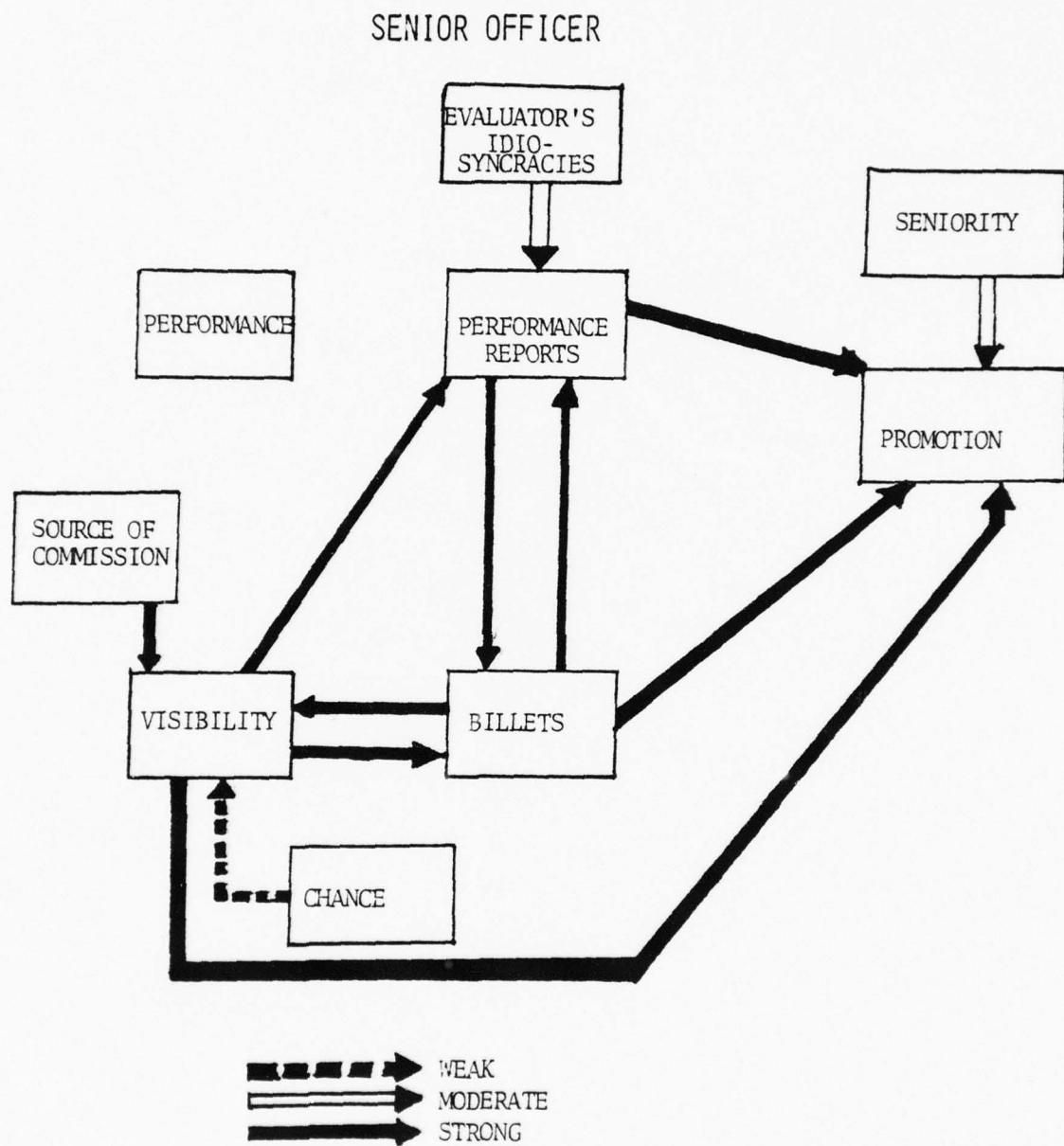


Fig. 8. Senior Officer Visibility Model<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Moore, David W., and Trout, B. Thomas, "Military Advancement: The Visibility Theory of Promotion," The American Political Science Review, 72, p. 460, Jun 1978.

While eight factors are considered of importance in these models, three are said to be most important: performance reports, visibility, and billets. The factors are portrayed as having weak, moderate, or strong influence at different grades. The models display the increasing importance of visibility as an officer's career progresses, starting as a moderate influence in regards to promotion as a junior officer (seniority being the overwhelmingly important factor), but strongly influencing the availability of billets. Then, during middle grade, fitness reports and billets (the proverbial "ticket punch") emerge as the crucial factors in promotion. Visibility influences promotions only to a moderate extent. Finally, at senior levels, visibility, supported by performance reports and billets, emerges as the predominant factor in advancement. This is a comfortable theory, difficult to substantiate in concrete terms, but nonetheless articulating a plausible explanation of officer upward mobility. It is particularly supportive of the phasing approach to be explored, in that the Fitness Report essentially achieves pre-eminence in the middle grades and plays a less central role early and late in the officer's career.

This should not be surprising. Good performance ensures good billets, which in turn create visibility. A corollary to this postulation is that weak or average performance early on can deprive an individual of the opportunity for high visibility billets, and can potentially predestine one to a career of mediocrity. In fact, Moore and Trout feel "that

an officer who has not developed high visibility after ten years or so of service has very little chance of being promoted to one or two stars and virtually no chance to reach three or four stars." Therefore, how are we to equitably construct our Fitness Report System so that people are competitive and effective for the longest period of time? We must concurrently consider the needs of the Navy as well as the individual. Clearly, the Navy's interests are best served by ensuring that junior officers get off to the best start possible. This requires a nurturing atmosphere wherein the officer learns through doing, is counseled concerning strengths and shortcomings, and is encouraged in his efforts. Diligent application on his part is all that is required to ensure selection to Lieutenant (opinion) and the selectivity process identifies the incompetent and inept in a fashion that is relatively painless to the group. Save for a limited number of jobs, very little information for comparing officers is required at this level. Yet whether intentional or not, the present format, by establishing a hierarchy from the onset, commits this group to a competition for visibility before it is absolutely necessary, and to the possible general detriment of the group as a whole. In the middle grades, officers presumably matured by their earlier training and experiences, are compelled to compete in a continual selection process for the billets that ensure their visibility in the later grades. The system must be fair but at the same time cold and critical in its findings due to the facts of life in a military organization (i.e., not everyone gets to be

Chief of Naval Operations). Feedback to such a group plays a minimal role, and in fact, may prove to be counterproductive. [Thompson and Dalton:157] A form of ranking and grading is inevitable and desirable. Finally, in the senior grades, where the billets and service reputation have established the primary contenders for flag rank, the performance evaluation, in order to have relevance, should deal with executive abilities on a more individualized and job-by-job basis. As previously stated, the evaluative needs of lower, middle and senior grade officers can best be served by various techniques appropriate to each. The following chapter(s) will deal with this by phase and in detail. As can be seen from this and previous chapters, it is very easy to find fault with the Navy's Office Fitness Reporting System. Judging by the criticism of performance appraisal by employers, employees and researchers, no system will be found to be completely satisfactory--particularly if used to select people for desirable but scarce jobs.

#### D. THE PRESENT JUNIOR OFFICER ENVIRONMENT

Career development charts for six categories of line officers are portrayed in the "unrestricted line officers planning book" (NAVPERS 15197, pages 16-21, illustrated on pages 76-81). Only male career patterns will be discussed because of the present uncertainty in the future woman officer career patterns. Flowpoints by year to various ranks are considered to be approximate and dependent on budget limitations, year-group sizes, retirement, etc.

SURFACE WARFARE OFFICER									
GRADE	TCS	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		QUALIFICATIONS		TYPE	BILLET	DUTY PREFERENCE	
		FIFTH SHORE • SUBSPECIALTY • MAJOR SHORE STAFF		• SHORE CMD				LOCATION	
25						MAJOR SHORE	1	1	1
24						SEA CAMP	2	2	2
23		CAPT COMMAND	MAJ SHORE CMD			PROV OFF BD	3	3	3
22									
21									
20		POST CD STAFF				CAPT SEL BD	1	1	1
19							2	2	2
18							3	3	3
17									
16		CDR CMD	OTHER SEA						
15									
14									
13									
12									
11									
10									
9									
8									
7									
6									
5									
4									
3									
2									
1									

\* NUCLEAR TRAINED OFFICERS ONLY

Figure 9. Surface Warfare Officer Career Development Chart<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> NAVPERS 15197, "Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook," p. 16.

AVIATION WARFARE OFFICER									
RANK	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		QUALIFICATIONS		TYPE	BILLET		DUTY PREFERENCE LOCATION	
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
CAPT	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
CDR	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
LCDR	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
LT	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
LT(j)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
ENS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Figure 10. Aviation Warfare Officer Career Development Chart<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> NAVPERS 15197, "Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook," p. 17.

NUCLEAR SUBMARINE OFFICER							
GRADE	TCS	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	QUALIFICATIONS	TYPE	BILLET	DUTY PREFERENCE LOCATION	
25	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAJOR SHORE STAFF</li> <li>• WASHINGTON SHORE</li> </ul>	WEAM _____ DATE	1	1	1	2
	24		MAI SEA CMB _____ DATE	2	2	1	3
	23		MAI SHORE CMB _____ DATE	3	1	2	1
	22		PROJ OFF _____ DATE	3	1	2	1
	21						
20	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WASHINGTON STAFF/SUPPORT</li> <li>• SR. SVC. COLLEGE</li> <li>• STAFF/SUPPORT</li> </ul>	CAPT CMB SEL _____	1	1	1	3
	20		CAPT SEL BD _____	2	2	1	2
	19			3	1	2	1
	18						
	17						
16	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAJOR SHORE STAFF/SUPPORT</li> <li>• WASHINGTON STAFF/SUPPORT</li> </ul>	• POWER SUBSPECIALIST	1	1	1	3
	18		• SR SVC BD	2	2	1	2
	17			3	1	2	1
	16						
	15						
14	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STAFF/SUPPORT</li> <li>• EXECUTIVE OFFICERS</li> </ul>	CDR SEL BD _____	1	1	1	2
	14		CMB SEL BD _____	2	2	1	2
	13		CMB QM _____	3	1	2	1
	12		PMW SUBSPEC _____	3	1	2	1
	11						
10	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PS UTILIZATION</li> <li>• MAJOR STAFF</li> <li>• PS SCHOOL</li> <li>• TYCOM STAFF SHORE</li> </ul>	ZD SCREEN _____	1	1	1	2
	11		“P” OR “S” CODE _____	2	2	1	2
	10		PMW SUBSPEC _____	3	1	2	1
	9		JR SVC BD _____	3	1	2	1
	8						
7	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEPARTMENT HEADS</li> <li>• SUBSCHL INST</li> <li>• HUC PMW/PROTOTYPE INST</li> <li>• STAFF &amp; PS SCHOOL</li> <li>• TENDER RADCOM • USRA SHORE</li> </ul>	LCDR SEL BD _____	1	1	1	2
	8			2	2	1	2
	7			3	1	2	1
	6						
	5						
4	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LT SEL BD</li> <li>• PM SEL BD</li> <li>• ENG QM</li> <li>• SS QM</li> <li>• COOW</li> </ul>	LT SEL BD _____	1	1	1	3
	4		PM SEL BD _____	2	2	1	2
	3		ENG QM _____	3	1	2	1
	2		SS QM _____	3	1	2	1
	1		COOW _____	1	1	1	2
3	1			2	2	1	2
	1			3	1	2	1
2	1						
	1						
1	1						

Figure 11. Nuclear Submarine Officer Career Development Chart<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> NAVPERS 15197, "Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook," p. 18.

STRATEGIC WEAPONS AND DIESEL SUBMARINE OFFICERS									
GRADE	YCS	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT		QUALIFICATIONS	TYPE	BILLET		DUTY PREFERENCE LOCATION	
		• WASHINGTON	• SUBSPECIALTY			WEAM	1	1	2
25				WEAM		1		1	2
24		CAPT	CAPT	MAJ		2		1	2
23			CMD	CMD		1		2	3
22				MAJ		2		1	2
21				SUB CMD		1		2	3
20				PROF		2		1	2
19				OFF BO					
18					CAPT	1		1	2
17					SEL BO	2		1	2
16						1	2	1	2
15									
14									
13									
12									
11									
10									
9									
8									
7									
6									
5									
4									
3									
2									
1									

Figure 12. Strategic Weapons and Diesel Submarine Officer Career Development Chart<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> NAVPERS 15197, "Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook," p. 19.

SPECIAL WARFARE OFFICER								
GRADE	YCS	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	QUALIFICATIONS	TYPE	BILLET	DUTY PREFERENCE LOCATION		
27	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAJOR COMMAND</li> <li>• BUREAUS</li> <li>• JOINT STAFFS</li> <li>• OPNAV</li> <li>• NAVSPECWARCIRUS</li> </ul>	MAJOR CMO _____ DATE _____  PROJ MGR _____			1	1	1
26	26					2	2	1
25	25					3	3	2
24	24					4	4	3
23	23					5	5	4
22	22					6	6	5
21	21			CAPT SEL BD WASH TOUR WSLME	1	1	1	1
20	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPERATIONAL STAFF</li> <li>• FLEET STAFFS</li> <li>• JOINT STAFFS</li> <li>• COSIGNONS</li> <li>• BUREAUS</li> <li>• OPNAV</li> <li>• SR SVC COLLEGE</li> </ul>	PROVRN SUBSPEC SR SVC BD	2	2	1	2	3
19	19			1	1	2	2	3
18	18			2	2	1	2	1
17	17			3	2	1	2	1
16	16			CDR SEL	1	1	1	2
15	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• C.O. UDT/SEAL/TRNG</li> </ul>		2	2	1	2	3
14	14			C.O.	3	1	2	1
13	13							
12	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BUREAUS/OPNAV</li> <li>• MAGIC/MISSIONS</li> <li>• JR. SVC COLLEGE</li> <li>• TYCOM STAFF</li> </ul>	C.O. SCREEN PROVRN SUBSPEC	1	1	1	2	1
11	11			2	2	1	2	1
10	10			3	2	1	2	1
9	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPERATIONAL STAFF</li> <li>• I.D. UDT/SEAL/UWRS</li> <li>• DEPARTMENT HEAD UDT/SEAL/UWRS</li> </ul>	JR. SVC SEL CDR SEL BD UWS OFF	1	1	1	2	3
8	8			2	2	1	2	3
7	7			3	1	1	2	1
6	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BUREAUS</li> <li>• COSIGNONS</li> <li>• TRAINING CMO</li> <li>• PG EDUCATION</li> <li>• DEP/STAFF</li> </ul>	LO SCRN 10" OR "S" CODE	1	1	1	2	1
5	5			2	2	1	2	1
4	4			3	2	1	2	1
3	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLATOON COMMANDER</li> <li>• I.D. AND SEAL TEAMS</li> </ul>	LT SEL P.G. SEL	1	1	1	2	1
2	2			2	2	1	2	1
1	1			3	1	1	2	1
		BASIC S.W. TRAINING						

Figure 13. Special Warfare Officer Career Development Chart<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> NAVPERS 15197, "Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook," p. 20.

WOMAN OFFICER									
GRADE	TCS	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	QUALIFICATIONS	TYPE	BILLET	DUTY PREFERENCE	LOCATION		
25		SENIOR SERVICE COLLEGE WASHINGTON HQ TOUR MAJOR SHORE COMMAND		1	1	1	2	1	
				2	2	1	2	1	
				3	3	1	2	1	
22		SUBSPECIALTY TOUR JOINT STAFF MAJOR FLEET STAFF CO TOUR		1	1	1	2	1	
				2	2	1	2	1	
				3	3	1	2	1	
				1	1	1	2	1	
				2	2	1	2	1	
				3	3	1	2	1	
16		WASHINGTON HQ TOUR PROVEN SUBSPECIALIST DESIGN SO TOUR JUNIOR SERVICE COLLEGE		1	1	1	2	1	
				2	2	1	2	1	
				3	3	1	2	1	
				1	1	1	2	3	
				2	2	1	2	3	
				3	3	1	2	3	
10		SUBSPECIALTY TOUR STAFF DUTY SUBSPECIALIST DESIGNATION POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL SUBSPECIALTY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION OFFICER/DEPT HQ EXP FIELD ACTIVITY ASSIGNMENT		1	1	1	2	1	
				2	2	1	2	1	
				3	3	1	2	1	
				1	1	1	2	1	
				2	2	1	2	1	
				3	3	1	2	1	
1		GENERAL TOURS		1	1	1	2	1	
				2	2	1	2	1	
				3	3	1	2	1	

Figure 14. Woman Officer Career Development Chart <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> NAVPERS 15197, "Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook," p. 21.

By referring to the warfare specialty career charts from the rank of Ensign to Lieutenant, it can be seen that the projected career path of any specialty has a similarity to the IBM career development plan described earlier in this chapter. Newly commissioned officers, regardless of commission source, receive some form of functional (warfare specialty) training. This training can be quite extensive, consisting of approximately 12-18 months flight training and 6 months at a fleet readiness squadron (FRS) for aviators, nuclear power (1 year) and/or submarine school (7 weeks) for submariners, and 23 weeks surface warfare school for surface warfare officers. Additionally, there is billet training when the officer is enroute to an operational command (e.g., damage control, communications, antisubmarine warfare, legal, material maintenance training, etc.). Junior officers then gain work experience as division officers at their operational command, with emphasis on progressive qualification:

1. In surface warfare, the officer is guided toward the surface warfare qualification by the Professional Qualification Standard (PQS) which sets down specific criteria for accomplishment enroute to qualifying for such duties as combat information center (CIC) watch officer, junior engineering officer of the watch (JEOW), and officer of the deck (OOD). Accomplishment of these and other similar qualifications will result in the surface warfare (IIIX) designator. A period of twenty-four months is normally allowed for earning this qualification (NAVPERS 15197:p. 24).

2. Submarine officers pursue similar relevant professional qualifications (diving officer of the watch, EOW, OOD) enroute to qualification in submarines and the 112X designator. The qualification period allowed is normally 18 months (NAVPERS 15197, p. 47).

3. Aviation officers, already qualified and designated 131X prior to arriving at their first operational squadron, continue to maintain their qualification by routine exercising of their proficiencies, e.g., the requisite flight hours (day and night) per months, arrested landings, helicopter small deck landings, etc. The initial squadron tour lasts approximately 2 1/2 to 3 years. [NAVPERS 15197:38]

Within a command, junior officers are often rotated between departments in order to expand their experience level. [NAVPERS 15197:24,28,47] Furthermore, Navy Manpower Personnel Center (NMPC) encourages a "fleetup" program whereby promising young officers within the command are reassigned to the more prestigious, responsible junior officer billets, such as navigator, CIC officer, or damage control assistant. [Maher:interview] New Ensigns are then provided as "numerical reliefs" to the less prestigious, vacated billets such as first lieutenant, electronics material officers or main propulsion assistant. [NMPC 413B:Interview]

In broad terms, then, the basis for an officer's evaluation in the developmental/apprentice phase becomes successful completion of warfare specialty and other functional schooling, and the degree of success which he experiences in the work environment. Based on good performance in these two areas,

the junior officer will have an opportunity for postgraduate education (general education as envisioned by Palmer) upon completion of his first sea/squadron tour and near his eligibility for selection to Lieutenant. [NAVPERS 15197:24,38,47]

#### E. IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF SUCCESSFUL JUNIOR OFFICERS

The junior officer career pattern has been discussed and related to career development. The role of evaluations in the development/apprentice phase will now be discussed.

The Fitness Report Form (NAVPERS 1611/2) largely focuses on personality traits, e.g., leadership, working relations, management, support, judgment, imagination, personal behavior. Percentile scores (ratings) are required for these traits. The form also calls for a rating comparing contemporaries, and a narrative (descriptive) summary of each officer's performance. It must be remembered that this form is used to describe a variety of officers corps and officers of every rank from Ensign to Rear Admiral. To what extent are these rating scales relevant to the junior (Ensign-Lieutenant Junior Grade) ranks? What is at stake in terms of major milestones during the developmental/apprentice period are selection for postgraduate schooling, department head schooling (in the case of surface warfare officers) and promotion to Lieutenant. Thus, at this grade level, there must exist an ability to identify those officers to be selected in each category. There are not difficult selection processes if the following facts are considered:

1. That promotion opportunity to the rank of Lieutenant is ninety-five percent. [Lawson:35]

2. That selection for postgraduate education relies both on the undergraduate transcript and demonstrated performance as a naval officer. [SECNAV Instruction 1520.4]

3. That officers are considered for surface warfare department head school only after completion of the surface warfare qualification and upon recommendation of their commanding officer [BUPERS Manual Article 6610340] ...a process which has screening effects.

Therefore, for purposes of selection board requirements in this career period, selection by negation (i.e., identifying the least fitted) would appear to be one feasible approach to the selection process. Occasionally, however, assignment officers utilize the fitness report to identify potential flag lieutenants and small command executive officers and department heads, prestigious billets which are limited in number. [BUPERS Inst 5400.1D] Furthermore, but also on a small scale, fitness reports in these ranks play an important role in selecting reserve officers for regular commissions (augmentation) and for transfers into different warfare specialties or staff corps. (This is called a specialty or "designator" change.) [BUPERS Inst 5400.1D]

With such a high opportunity for selectivity, and the existence of such complementary mechanisms as qualifications, transcripts, and recommendations, it is probable that a peer comparison is not needed at the junior officer stage of the career, and that ranking per se need play little tangible role in an officer's advancement from both a managerial and a personal

standpoint. As an example, in a study of performance conducted in two western style companies in the Republic of India, Dayal pointed out that "there is seldom difficulty in identifying extreme patterns of behavior and not much time and money need be spent on the exercise. This is true in almost all spheres of work: in selection, in recognizing merit or in planning." [Dayal:28] If this is true, then there should be little difficulty in identifying non-select officers for the rank of lieutenant, or in identifying top performing officers for important billets. Also, consider a supervisory (command) viewpoint: "If a manager knows that he must eventually tell all his men what percentiles they fall in, he is almost forced to begin thinking of some of his men as below average or at the bottom of the heap. Once he begins thinking this way about those men, they will sense it...and in most cases, this will have a negative effect on their performance." [Thompson and Dalton:153]

This investigator believes that the Navy would be much better served in using the developmental/apprentice phase in assisting the officer in developing to his fullest capacity. Essentially, it should be objective oriented and designed for feedback. Quality of performance need not be downplayed; rather it can be stressed as a central objective based on orientation and education, training and qualification. If objectives can be established on which a man can set his sights, and if a man can be helped by encouragement and assistance, improvement is likely to take place.

One of the interesting and common features of a junior officer's career development is the amount of training he

receives and the continuous qualifying which is expected of him. Specifics of these qualifications are already institutionalized by type commander regulations, PQS, and Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures (NATOPS) manuals. Furthermore, of vital concern to a junior division officer is the success of his division in attaining prescribed objectives, whether by way of performance inspections, exercises or in routine work. All of these requirements already have a bearing on the officer's evaluation. However, with the present approach, solid, measurable accomplishment can be obscured by fitness reports which speak to personality and require comparisons among ratees. A shift to an objectives orientation would bring performance into greater focus, and at the same time allow more participation in success. Such a program would be more incentive oriented in terms of concrete, perceptible accomplishment, and incorporates already existing requirements into a unified, purposeful system.

While such a system might prove useful in the lower ranks, there would be difficulty in relying solely on an MBO approach in the middle and senior ranks where the selection percentages are considerably lower and selection boards require discriminating data. (This is not to rule out MBO in higher ranks as a motivation and development technique.) Peer comparison and descriptive data are dictated by the necessity to manage the selection process. Nor would it be desirable to pre-emptorily change the rating system on the day that an officer is promoted to Lieutenant. Such a policy might be disorienting and only transfer the adjustment phase from the early career to later,

and become a possible source of negative attitudes about the system. What might be possible is the bridging of an objectives evaluation system, i.e., an MBO like system, to the present existing system by using a document currently in use, the Appraisal Work Sheet, or a modified version thereof. At present, current instructions require that the form be retained by the reporting officer and used as a basis for discussing the evaluation with the ratee. The appraisal work sheet forms the basis by which the current evaluation is developed. Specific Aspects of Performance (SAPs) are identified which comprise the basis for the evaluation. Within these SAPs, sub-items assist in defining and providing guidelines for the performance appraisal discussion. Page 12 of this thesis shows the specific aspects of performance as they appear on the appraisal work sheet. Because factors are identified which should be considered in evaluating each aspect of performance, the SAP portion of the work sheet bears a resemblance to the "personal qualities" (Section 17) portion of the Coast Guard reports. (Of further interest is that Item 17 factors among others, of the Coast Guard report, are contained in the "personal characteristics" (Section 90) portion of the former officer fitness report. [NAVPERS 1611/1 REV 12-69] Seemingly, both services are in agreement that specifics are needed in evaluating personal qualities, but are in disagreement as to which qualities are most worthy of evaluation.) Rating scales are provided by the Navy in terms of percentiles and "transcription codes" or corresponding letter grades. They, therefore, can be used as an educational, or counseling device to instruct the

junior officer on how he can be expected to be graded later in his career. At the same time, the officer is spared the possibility of harming his record by a performance inadequacy likely to be overcome through normal growth and development.

#### F. THE MIDDLE GRADE OFFICER ENVIRONMENT

During this phase which lasts approximately ten years, officers are heavily involved in putting their previously established qualifications to use, and in demonstrating their performance in a variety of roles. Navy career development charts (Pages 76-81) show that most officers will receive postgraduate education or be assigned shore or staff duty, followed by operational department head tours in their warfare specialty (flight instructor or shipboard duties in their case of aviators). As stated in NAVPERS 15197, "performance in this tour enables XO/CO screening boards to identify superior operational officers at about the Lieutenant-Commander level (9 or more years of commissioned service). [NAVPERS 15197:9,10] This duty is normally followed by a second shore tour in the subspecialty in which trained at postgraduate school, or if not so trained, in other billets that have been identified as providing specific background in a subspecialty. Officers who have performed in either such situation receive subspecialty codes and are considered by biennial subspecialty boards for selection as "proven subspecialists." The designation is based on "recent relevant experience, and superior performance in a subspecialty." [Ibid:10]

Thereafter, careers diversify in a variety of directions-- operational executive officer tours, department head tours, staffs, staff college, or a second subspecialty tour. All paths are primarily directed toward advancement, qualification, and selection to command. (Present opportunity for operational commander command tours are approximately: 50% surface, 55% aviation, and 80% submarine). [Ibid:39,49] Also implicit in the above career milestones are a continual requirement to strive for selection to promotion to Lieutenant-Commander and Commander. Thus, it can be seen that performance evaluations assume added importance, and in many ways can be some of the most crucial evaluations in an officer's career. It also stands to reason that reports at this level must be very detailed and discriminating. Much of what was of little necessity in the junior officer's evaluation now has utility to promotion boards (i.e., descriptive data, peer comparisons, notable strengths and weaknesses). This stems from a simple supply and demand problem in that there are almost always more officers available for desired billets or for the next rank that can be assigned or promoted. Consequently, selection boards must be convened to make the decisions as to who are "best fitted." [Lawson:31]

Of necessity, therefore, the evaluation process must serve the administrative needs of the system to a greater extent than the fulfillment/motivational needs of the individual. (Another good reason for conducting an evaluation program more supportive of the individual while the opportunity presents itself in the junior ranks--the opportunity declines rapidly thereafter.) The evaluation document must now support

the needs of selection boards and assignment officers, ensuring that as much information as possible is provided on which to base their important decisions. [Cook:90] Unfortunately, this implies that the evaluation must be both descriptive and comparative so that as accurate a picture as possible can be portrayed of the individual. [Ibid:91] The Commanding Officer must, therefore, be provided with the most appropriate tool by which to introduce this information into the system. Additionally, the tool must be useful in describing performance in a variety of billets. Revision 9-72 of NAVPERS 1611/1 provides descriptive and comparative information to personnel managers. The report annually provides information used by 46 different selection boards. The results of selection boards, though occasionally debated, are generally accepted by the Naval officer corps. [Navy Times, Jun 26, 1978]

Although the central complaint about the Fitness Report would seem to be grade inflation, [Snyder:51] no part of the report is immune from criticism. Other common complaints are that:

1. The revised form is too heavy in its emphasis on management to the detriment of operational considerations. [Pendley:101]
2. Specific Aspects of Performance can be too involved or confusing. [Snyder:50]
3. More emphasis is required on describing an officer's potential. [Pendley:102]
4. Rank orderings of ratees can be subject to manipulation. [Snyder:102]

#### G. USES OF THE FITNESS REPORT AT THE MIDDLE GRADE LEVEL

Selection boards and assignment officers are the primary users of fitness reports. They are heavily used by the boards and assignment officers than in the staffing/managerial phase of officers' careers. Thus, any contemplated changes in Evaluation Reporting must be closely tied to consideration as to how these two functions will be affected, or more importantly, how they will contribute to the betterment of both the individual officer and the promotion, selection and assignment processes.

It should be understood that assignment officers play close attention to the deliberations of any board affecting their community. (Often assignment officers provide representation to selection boards as assistants in the capacities of data projectionists and recorders.) The findings of selection boards can affect assignment officer attitudes toward individual officer assignment needs. Logically, it is in the best interest of the individual officer to have his case for promotion/selection presented to the board in the fairest way possible. Therefore, any revision to the existing format should be directed primarily toward facilitating the deliberations of selection boards so that they make the most equitable and valid decisions possible.

What is important to selection boards? Specific criteria will change from year to year because of emphasis on items of current importance, (e.g., human relations, project management, communications, etc.). However, some ingredients remain fairly consistent. The following are the five most recurrent items of publicized precepts to Captain and Admiral selection boards  
FY 74-77:

1. Leadership
2. Operational experience, specifically command related.
3. Managerial expertise, specifically project manager and subspecialty related.
4. Equal emphasis on recent past performance and potential.
5. Combat experience. [Lawson:161-167]

There is an interesting similarity to the results of a U.S. Army study which showed that four specific items of information were of a much greater significance than any other information in predicting the probability of promotion of an officer:

1. His late career (most recent four years) manner of performance.
2. His performance as an operational commander.
3. His performance on higher level staffs.
4. His performance of duty while in combat. [Heathcock:27]

While not identical, both sets of criteria emphasize current performance, operational and managerial expertise, and combat experience (when possible).

Complaints about the present Navy Fitness Reports seem to address these points in more specific form. In the middle grade officer phase, it would appear then that there is less opposition to the form's objectives than to the mechanics by which those objectives are attained.

#### H. THE COMMANDER/CAPTAIN (EXECUTIVE) PHASE

During this phase, the officer's responsibilities increase considerably. He finds himself in a manner of "graduation

exercise" of all that he has learned and experienced to date.

By most standards, he can already be considered to be reasonably successful, yet at the same time, he finds that this will also be the most challenging phase of his career. Heretofore, while his previous billets have been ones of increasing responsibility, they have been stepping stones to this phase, where responsibility and authority are more ultimate in nature--the command of a ship, squadron, or base, the division or branch head of a major agency, or the project manager of a major weapons system. [NAVPER 15197:33, 34, 39, 49, 50] With the exception of selection to Captain, major command screening and senior staff college selections and promotions, fitness reports are used primarily for assignment. Selectivity can present a problem in ranks because of the uniformly high marks generally given to such officers. Figure shows that the majority of officers of both ranks were being marked in the lowest two (best) categories of the Fitness Report Index (FRI). These results were found during a study conducted concurrently with the inception of the present system. [Lockman and Maulden:48,49] (The FRI is a computerized compilation of scores on present and past fitness report evaluations.) [Lockman and Mauldren:45]

With such an abundance of high quality officers to choose from, other factors must be at play in the determination of which officers will be selected and assigned to the most prestigious and important career billets. Moore and Trout's "Visibility Theory" offers some plausible explanations: "Since all tasks are not equally observable nor all observers equally influential, visibility varies to the degree to which an individual is in a position to be observed by peers and superiors who can influence his movement in the organization. Visibility then has two aspects:

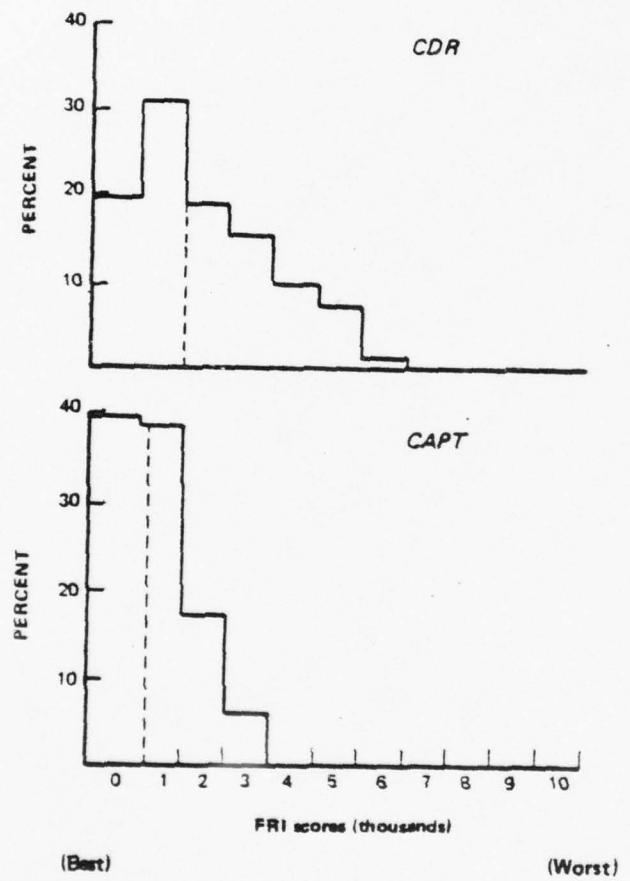


FIG. 15. FRI DISTRIBUTION FOR CAPT THROUGH LT<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Center for Naval Analyses 1022, Revision of the Officer Fitness Report by Robert F. Lockman and Hoyt P. Maulden, 1975.

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one reflects the position occupied; the other reflects the contacts established while occupying the position. Thus visibility can be examined both at a single point in time and in terms of its cumulative effects.

Both aspects of visibility have been recognized in the military setting. Janowitz, for example, has noted with regard to the first that a candidate's ability to rise farther depends on the particular assignment which will permit him to display his talents and make a conspicuous contribution. With regard to contacts, Janowitz later notes that, in building a reputation each younger officer has the task of coming to the attention of important superiors. Visibility then applies where certain billets have a premium over others. And it applies to the system of contacts established cumulatively by an individual officer. Visible officers transcend the performance reporting system since their activities will be monitored relatively frequently by influential or potentially influential officers other than their immediate reporting seniors. Moreover, the criteria by which their activity is evaluated will be increasingly influenced by expectations about their future potential, rather than simply the outcomes of their currently assigned duties." [Moore and Trout:455,456]

Visibility must assuredly be of most importance in the senior ranks when the selectivity to achieve those ranks is considered. For example, promotion opportunities for in zone unrestricted line officers in Fiscal Year 1978 were as follows:

<u>To Grade of</u>	<u>Opportunity*</u>
Captain	60%
Commander	70%
Lieutenant Commander	85%
Lieutenant	95%
Lieutenant Junior Grade	100%

\*FY 1978 Data Officer Personnel Newsletter  
Fall 1977, page 9.

If the selection rates are assumed to remain fairly constant, as they have in recent years, a junior officer with career intentions beyond 15 years of service has a 57 percent chance of attaining the rank of commander and, beyond 22 years, a thirty-four percent chance of attaining the rank of Captain. Thus, Commanders and Captains represent populations that have already received a significant amount of screening. Within the framework of each rank, however, some jobs will increase the individual officer's chances beyond these raw percentages. Although there are several other examples of such visibility jobs (notably XO screen, proven subspecialist, and specialist). The surface Commander command screen will be used to make the point. Shortly after an officer is selected for Commander, a board is convened to identify officers who will be ordered to command at sea in this rank (Commander). The individual Commander has 6 years of eligibility during which he may be so identified. Selection opportunity is fifty percent of any year group. [NAVPERS 15197:33] Yet, eight-four percent of those with command experience in the rank of Commander were selected for Captain in FY78 (Officer Personnel Newsletter Fall 1977). Conversely, the

approximately fifty percent of Commanders without command experience opportunity (as a Commander) had a much lower promotion percentage (16%) to Captain.

The importance of visibility may be explored at lower ranks as well. Consider the fact that an important credential for both selection to Commander and, later, to command is a successful tour as a Lieutenant-Commander executive officer. [NAVPERS 15197:31] Only 55-65% of Lieutenant Commanders receive tours as executive officers. [NAVPERS 15197:31] It might be argued that visibility is not so much at work here as a simple organizational requirement to maintain a senior officer cohort heavy in operational experience. However, the opportunity to receive the experience as well as the future opportunity that the experience presents can often be translated into visibility jobs"...bils and visibility are both cumulative factors. After ten years or so of service, it is difficult to generate a continuing sequence of good job assignments or to develop a wide network of contacts simply by chance." [Moore and Trout:459] Another facet of visibility: "At higher levels, the best junior officers are presumed to work for the "Best" senior officers and therefore outstanding performance reports are expected. Only the rare instance of clearly incompetent performance (which would be extremely rare), or a personality conflict which might occur more frequently) would break the anticipated pattern of outstanding performance reports." [Moore and Trout:459] Therefore, to a large degree, officers who have been able to serve in a chain of important billets meet in the senior ranks to compete for the desirable jobs. Performance is not necessarily the only basis of this

competition: "For senior officers, in fact, performance ceases to be an influence in the promotion process. Any job at this level is so diffuse in its requirements compared to job assignments at lower levels that evaluation of performance against objective and reliable criteria is virtually impossible. Moreover, senior officers are expected to do well. They are, after all, according to their performance reports, the best in the service; unless there are personality conflicts, that high expectation again acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Chance remains of some importance in affecting visibility, but no longer affects billets. With respect to visibility, all officers at the senior level will by this time have developed a network of relationships and a reputation among other senior officers. The greater the extend of the networks, the greater the visibility. Of course, some contacts may be especially fruitful, so that an officer whose visibility may be otherwise low (because of relatively few contacts) may nevertheless be greatly aided by one particularly influential contact. Which contacts may be especially influential? The impossibility of answering that question explains why chance retains some impact on visibility at the senior officer level." [Moore and Trout:460-461]

In all likelihood, then, the fitness report defers to billets and visibility as determinants of attainment of flag rank or assignment to a key position. This suggests that political influence can play a greater consideration in selection than actual capabilities. An officer of greater leadership ability or managerial expertise may not even have as good an opportunity

at high rank as an officer of lesser ability who is endowed with a greater number of sponsors or political contacts. The problem becomes: How best to reintroduce performance as a factor in the selection equation? One possible technique worth considering is the personnel assessment center.

#### I. APPLICATION OF ASSESSMENT CENTERS TO THE U.S. NAVY

The assessment center would seem to have applicability for a military officer corps. It has been indicated that several allied nations are already utilizing the technique. Within the Department of Defense the U.S. Army is the only notable user, incorporating it in their programs at the Army War College and at the Army Infantry School [Allen:29-30] and in the Non-commissioned Officer Education Program. [Olmstead:7] The use of the assessment center by the U.S. Navy has been recommended by Allen as a subsystem of officer career development and by McGann as a selection process for Medical Service Officers.

Allen recommends five phases at which the assessment center would be appropriate.

1. Career Entry: A brief (one day) process with selection of officer candidates as the objective.
2. Career Commitment: At the completion of initial obligated service with the objective of determining which career path to choose (operational, technical, or managerial).

3. Selection for Initial Command: A selection process crucial to the individual and the organization. The objective would be to combat the "Peter Principle."<sup>1</sup>

4. Selection for Major Command/Flag Rank or Early Retirement: An incremental step from (3) with the same basic objective.

5. Retirement: A personalized personnel management program viewed as a career benefit. [Allen:139-142]

This writer agrees with Allen's recommendations, particularly (3) and (4). The assessment center would appear to be of particular value in a selection process where all of the candidates are competitive with each other (based on previous fitness reports) and where so much is at stake to both the officers and the organization. In addition to command and flag rank, critical management positions at the Captain level such as project managers, personnel distribution divisions, executive assistants to major DOD officials, fleet chiefs of staff, and so on, should be considered for inclusion in a list of billets to which selection would be controlled (at least in parts) by the recommendations of the assessment center.

A drawback to the assessment center approach as envisioned by Allen would be the cost factor. To accomplish the full scope of what is recommended would probably require the establishment of an assessment organization consisting of several teams stationed over a wide area. This would not appear to be financially acceptable in the present austere budget environment.

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<sup>1</sup>The principle whereby an individual rises to the level of his incompetence and remains there to disrupt orderly and management practices, The Peter Principle, Peter and Hull, Morrow and Company, 1969.

When the numbers decrease to those which would be involved in the ranks of Commander and Captain, then the cost becomes more justifiable from the standpoint of:

1. Number of officers involved as assessees.
2. Number of personnel dedicated to assessor duties.
3. Reduced number of locations at which the majority of the population would be located.
4. Cost/benefit factors with regard to the importance of the billets for which candidates are being assessed.

#### IV. PROPOSALS

##### A. THE JUNIOR OFFICER PHASE

By virtue of high selection rates and the developmental nature of the junior officer environment, there appears to exist within the present Navy fitness report system enough flexibility to consider the reorganization of junior officer evaluation methods. The very necessary objective of evaluation can be conducted as a greater motivational experience than at present, while at the same time serving the Navy's needs. To this end, a junior officer fitness report could be revised to reflect the following:

1. A Shift to More Objective-Oriented Evaluating Criteria Reflective of Actual Accomplishments During a Reporting Period

As envisioned, this would probably require the use of a different form. Figures 16 and 17 show forms in use at IBM and Texas Instruments Corporation. Information presently required in Item 28 of the present fitness report would be expanded to reflect specific, significant qualifications in training, qualification achieved, and goals established for the next reporting period. This category could make provisions for watch stander qualifications achieved, or present degree of completion, successful accomplishment of duties as division officers or of collateral duties, and a statement of envisioned challenges in the ensuing reporting period. Any other noteworthy accomplishments or goals of significance to the naval

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PRESENT POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING:

DATE OF APPRAISAL:

EMPLOYEE'S INTERESTS AND ASPIRATIONS:

PROMOTABILITY (List positions to which promotable either now or within 2-3 years. Project when ready for each):

POSSIBLE ULTIMATE POTENTIAL:

EXPLANATION OF ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS (Comment on accomplishments, personal attributes and mgmt. abilities which are responsible for your evaluation. Be specific):

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS (What education, personal improvement, or other functional / divisional experience would increase his potential for advancement?):

DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS ACCOMPLISHED IN PAST 5 YEARS: (List major development actions accomplished with month & year completed)

DEVELOPMENT PLAN (Additional actions planned W/M? Person to carry out):

PREPARED BY	DATE	REVISED BY	DATE
MC4-0303-3			

Fig. 16. IBM MBO Appraisal Form<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Palmer, W. J., "An Integrated Program for Career Development," Personnel Journal, p. 403, Jun 1972.

EXHIBIT I		EXHIBIT II	
PERFORMANCE REVIEW		TEXAS INSTRUMENTS	
This form is to be completed by the individual and presented to his supervisor during the performance planning discussion.			
PERFORMANCE REVIEW FORM (Employee Name) <u>John Doe</u> (Supervisor Name) <u>Manager</u> (Employee Address) <u>123 Main Street</u> (Supervisor Address) <u>123 Main Street</u> (Employee Phone) <u>555-1234</u> (Supervisor Phone) <u>555-1234</u> (Employee Grade) <u>10</u> (Supervisor Grade) <u>10</u> (Employee Date of Birth) <u>01/01/1940</u> (Supervisor Date of Birth) <u>01/01/1940</u> (Employee Job Code) <u>100-0000</u> (Supervisor Job Code) <u>100-0000</u>			
<b>ACCOMPLISHMENTS:</b> Completion and progress on goals planned for past six months.			
<b>LONG-RANGE GOALS:</b> List your specific job related and personal goals. These form the basis for discussion with your supervisor.			
<b>SIX-MONTH GOALS</b>			
<b>EXHIBIT II</b> <b>PERFORMANCE PLANNING</b>		Forms are available to make carbon copies as necessary Top section to be completed by the individual after the performance planning discussion.	
State what you plan to do to achieve the specific goals you listed on the reverse side of this form. Consider why these goals are important to you and TI, plans for action, performance standards and measurement criteria, anticipated problems, required assistance, and target dates and priorities. These are developed in the discussion with your supervisor.			
<b>PERFORMANCE SUMMARY FOR SUPERVISOR USE:</b> Evaluate accomplishments based on job requirements and contribution to TI goals.			
Give the original to your supervisor who will forward it to personnel for permanent retention. Keep copies as necessary.			
SIGNATURE <u>John Doe</u>	REVIEWED AND APPROVED <u>Manager</u>	CLASSIFICATION APPROVAL CHECK ONE <input type="checkbox"/> TI INTERNAL DATA <input type="checkbox"/> STRICTLY PRIVATE	

Fig. 17. Texas Instruments MBO Performance Review<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hughes, Charles L., "Why Goal Oriented Performance Reviews Succeed and Fail," Personnel Journal, V. 45, p. 337, 1966.

development of the officer, such as relevant correspondence courses or community relations endeavors, would also be included. Subitems or additional items might provide for commentary or for indication of the degree of satisfaction with which the officer has approached his objectives and achieved his goals, as well as for eligibilities and recommendations for future qualifications and assignments. Pros and cons of such an approach are as follows:

a. Benefits

(1) A more positive, goal-oriented flavor to the evaluation. Increased officer motivation is expected.

(2) A greater and more formalized inclusion of presently existing qualification requirements into the evaluation system.

(3) By concentrating on accomplishment and avoiding evaluation of traits, a more tangible basis is provided on which to prepare evaluations.

(4) The judicial role of the reporting senior is eased since more weight is given to an individual's achievement.

(5) Because they are competing only against goals junior officers should have an increased opportunity to reflect improvement or decline at their own and no one else's expense.

b. Weaknesses

(1) Efforts by political-minded commanding officers to manipulate the system could lead to qualifications becoming more arbitrary.

(2) The proposal could possibly require more paperwork in terms of additional forms, instructions, argumentation, and substantiation. However, much documentation already exists

for qualification, such as P.Q.S. and NATOPS which could fulfill most system needs.

(3) Opportunities for qualification are not always equal and can vary with individual commands. However, all commands should have objectives to which the individual can be related to and evaluated on.

(4) More senior management time is likely to be consumed in establishing goals.

## 2. A Greater Emphasis on Counseling and Feedback

It is envisioned that this could be accomplished through the present or a revised version of the Appraisal Work Sheet. A dual purpose could be served in using this requirement to prepare officers for the transition into the next phase by emphasizing shortcomings and strengths as perceived by the reporting officer. This counseling session would coincide with the periodic reporting requirements. A review of achievements and shortfalls as well as a discussion of the next period's goals could be tied with a discussion of notable strengths and weaknesses as they would apply to the middle rank evaluation system. The review of strengths and weaknesses would be on a no fault basis. The officer would be provided a copy of the appraisal sheet, and no formal record would be maintained outside of the command.

### a. Benefits

(1) Feedback and counseling would be conducted in a more salutary atmosphere.

(2) Motivation of a greater block of Junior Officers could probably be achieved.

(3) Officers can be prepared for the critical but necessary middle grade evaluative phase. This could be accomplished on a no fault basis where the officer is able to learn by his mistakes and with no penalty to his official record.

(4) A closer command-subordinate communication can be ensured.

(5) For reasons (1) through (5) above, this proposal is a potentially positive aid in increasing junior officer retention. Through the first four years of commissioned service, the individual officer has been given the opportunity to develop in a nurturing atmosphere in which he can experience success and feel more confident and positive about the future.

b. Weaknesses

(1) Feedback can always have negative consequences, especially if given improperly.

(2) A greater investment in time could be required of the commanding officer and executive officer.

3. An Elimination of Comparative Rankings

Since there is relatively little need for discrimination for the purposes of selection or assignment in this career phase, the evaluation portion (Item 51) could be more generalized to the "top," "typically effective" and "bottom" categories already featured in the present form. It is recommended that there be no subdivisions of each category as is the present case. Additionally the "summary," (or ranking) portion (Item 52) would be eliminated.

a. Benefits

(1) Can create a more positive atmosphere within the command, minimizing the "crown prince" perception, and fostering the perception that the reporting senior is fair-minded.

(2) Eliminates the zero-sum relationship from the junior officer community and enables a wider group to feel successful.

b. Weaknesses

(1) Obscures the hierarchy of performers and thus could cause difficulties in managing the officer distribution system.

(2) Can condition officers to an attitude that this form of evaluation will continue, whereas the need to differentiate will require peer comparison, at a later stage of the career.

4. A Revision of the Personal Traits Criteria

Personal traits can be most appropriately discussed as a portion of the appraisal work sheet, pointing out minor flaws and strengths on a personalized basis with the provision that significant personal failings can be entered and elaborated on for the record in the "comments" section, as is the current procedure. The present traits, revised in accordance with a proposal made in Chapter VI of this thesis, would suit this purpose. These traits would appraise junior officers of the qualities desired in a successful Naval officer.

a. Benefits

- (1) Personal traits can be discussed in a more receptive atmosphere which will be conducive to frankness.
- (2) Taking personal traits "off the record" can probably reduce the leniency tendency and increase the chances of a more meaningful evaluation.
- (3) Frank discussions of meaningful evaluations can be more educational and formative to the developing officer than at present.

b. Weaknesses

- (1) Discussion of personal traits can be counter-productive if not handled tactfully. [Meyer et al, p. 123]
- (2) A means of denoting trends is lost at the managerial level where a complete picture of an officer's career is maintained. [BUPERS Inst 1611.12E] This will be ameliorated somewhat by the fact that significant weaknesses will still require comment by the commanding officer.
- (3) By continuing to identify personal traits (albeit indirectly) as part of the evaluative process, personality may continue to have a contaminating effect on other parts of the performance evaluation process.

5. An Adjustment in the Officer Distribution System to Accommodate the Revised Format

As a former placement officer in the officer distribution system, this investigator thinks that the problems of such an adjustment cannot be minimized. It is envisioned that the following adjustments would be required:

- a. Greater attention by detailers and placement officers to concrete qualifications and accomplishments, and

an attitudinal adjustment away from regarding the ranking, or "split" as the most meaningful portion of form.

b. Recognition that promotion probability for junior ranks are inherently high and that identifying individuals by percentile can be sacrificed for developmental goals without serious consequences to quality of assignments.

c. A revision of selection criteria for assignment to highly prestigious and desirable billets. As mentioned before, it is anticipated that exceptional performance will still be recognizable. Greater emphasis on previous experience and qualifications will most likely be required in augmentation. However, for small commands, officers-in-charge, executive officers, or flag aide billets, queries to the prospective officer's commanding officer as to the advisability of the assignment may be required.

The following are considered the pros and cons from the standpoint of the officer distribution system:

(1) Benefits

(a) A more accurate, honest profile of junior officers would be provided in terms of qualification and experience.

(b) The revised, more objective format should provide the group as a whole greater motivation, and could conceivably increase junior officer retention.

(2) Weaknesses

(a) Any revision of the fitness report will require adjustments to assignment policies and thus, will disturb the present system.

(b) Elimination of percentile information could cause officer assignment policies to be perceived as susceptible to favoritism.

(c) A greater administrative burden could be imposed as a result of revised assignment policies. Both the officer distribution division and individual commands would be affected.

#### B. THE MIDDLE GRADE OFFICER PHASE

Assuming that:

1. At these officer ranks, the form must provide differentiating data to facilitate the selection process.
2. Drastic restructuring of the Fitness Report System can cause undesirable turmoil,
3. Any dissatisfaction with the present form stems primarily from procedural matters than substantive.

There seems to be little reason to change the present format combination of peer comparison, rating scale, and narrative description techniques. Rather, modifications within the scope of the aforementioned techniques should be considered.

Several proposals follow:

1. Impose Restrictions on the Use of the First (and Possibly Second) Highest Categories of "Evaluation" (Item 51) and "Summary" (Item 52) (Formerly the One and Five Percentile Categories).

Two opportunities for ranking as a top officer would still remain. The restriction could take the form of a nomination procedure whereby a command could nominate an officer for top ranking within a ship squadron or an air wing. He would be

in competition with officers of other commands for a controlled number of high rankings. A less elaborate procedure might require justification when using the highest rating. For instance, an endorsement by the next level in the chain of command might be required if the highest rating is given.

a. Benefits

(1) An acknowledgement by the system that while there are many very fine officers, only a special few can receive top ratings.

(2) An elimination of a level of doubt in the minds of the selection board by prescreening the most deserving officers.

(3) Recognition for the clearly superior officer.

b. Weaknesses

(1) Control of the highest rankings could accentuate already existing biases and further obscure performance as a factor. Subjective traits could emerge as an important factor in an effort to influence the selection decision.

(2) The proposal would increase the potential for politicking. (The recommendation of an officer carries with it the honor of the command.)

(3) It is a movement toward the zero-sum relationship.

(4) Such a system would be more difficult to administer to staff corps officers whose numbers are smaller.

2. An Entirely Different Ranking Procedure (alternative to subparagraph 1).

By this method the rating officer would be required to rate an officer in terms relative to the rater's performance while in the rank of the ratee. This would "give the reporting senior a reason to begin every evaluation with his pencil at the middle of the scale (about the same) instead of at the highest end, as is done so often now. Such a standard suffers from the drawback of being invalid when the reporting senior and the subject are of differing competitive categories, but generally the perspective of one's own performance at a comparable grade is likely to produce a more bell shaped curve than we see now." [Snyder:53]

a. Benefits

(1) There is a high potential for a drastic reduction in grade inflation.

(2) There is a greater likelihood of a normal distribution.

(3) Competition is transposed from between contemporaries to the reporting senior.

b. Weaknesses

(1) The comparison itself is obscure and it would be impractical to retrieve the reporting senior's evaluations in that grade if he wanted to review them. The impact of the vagaries of memory is unknown without research.

(2) Comparisons would be required between officers differing in warfare specialty/staff corps expertise.

3. Increase the Emphasis on Potential

The present form spends little time on the question of potential, yet it is one of the major information needs of the

selection boards. Specific questions should be developed as to the officer's promotability and beyond in order to assist selection boards and assignment officer actions. [Snyder:51]

a. Benefits

- (1) Would reduce the need for selection boards and assignment officers to "read between the lines."
- (2) Would bring Fitness Reports more in line with present usage.

b. Weaknesses

- (1) Frankness implicit in such a requirement could prove to be demotivating.
- (2) The possibility exists that a new problem could be induced--that of "rank inflation," whereby officers could be recommended for ranks beyond their potential.
- (3) Raters may not be able to make accurate judgments regarding potential.

4. Strike a Better Balance Between Operations and Management in the "Specific Aspects of Performance" Section (Items 29-37)

To make the Fitness Report more pertinent to a Naval officer's performance, it would be clearer to substitute:

- a. Performance in primary billet as \_\_\_\_\_; for goal setting and achievement.
- b. Leadership and development of subordinates; for subordinate management and development.
- c. Performance in collateral billets as \_\_\_\_\_; for Navy organizational support. [Pendley:101]

Performance in watch standing, warfare specialty and subspecialty remain the same.

(1) Benefits

(a) Would emphasize the operational importance of performance.

(b) Would make leadership factor less obscure and more in keeping with its key role with promotion boards.

(2) Weaknesses

(a) No major shortcomings.

5. Eliminate the Process of Showing the Officer His Fitness Report

a. Benefits

(1) Rater would be encouraged to be more frank in his evaluation.

(2) Reduced grade inflation might be realized.

b. Weaknesses

(1) Can increase anxieties, since ratee will not know where he stands; developmental goals would not be served.

(2) Would be difficult to implement given existing "open" policy.

C. THE SENIOR OFFICER PHASE

It is recommended that consideration be given to the use of assessment centers at the Commander/Captain level as a means of improving the evaluation and selection of officers to high rank and responsibility. The assessment center need not be a part of the formal promotion process, but with a careful selection of the billets to be controlled by the assessment center. The program would have an impact as an important screening device.

1. Benefits

a. The assessment center evaluates potential and thus helps combat the "Peter Principle."

b. The assessment center can prove to be of great assistance in the selection process where grade inflation is a common problem.

c. The assessment center can provide meaningful feedback to participants which can help them improve their managerial skills.

2. Weaknesses

a. The assessment center will require increased expenditures.

b. The implementation of an assessment center program so crucial in impact could arouse great anxiety in the individuals involved.

c. The assessment center would be in direct conflict with the "visibility" method of promotion which has been long established. Thus, strong opposition to an assessment program as an evaluation device for senior officers can be anticipated.

D. SUMMARY

In this thesis, the following recommendations are made for the U.S. Navy Officer Evaluation System:

1. The evaluation process should be recognized as a dynamic system. It should be reviewed every five years for relevance and effectiveness by the Naval Manpower and Personnel Center. The review should consider the total system in relation to both

the needs of the individual and administrative requirements, eliminating or altering those portions of the system which have proven unnecessary or unproductive and considering the use of promising innovative evaluation techniques.

2. At different phases in the Naval officer career, different evaluative techniques are needed. Both the individual and the organization will benefit if evaluation methods are tailored to phases in officers' careers.

3. Greater emphasis should be made in training and educating raters and selection boards concerning the present fitness report or about any new appraisal program. For example, officers ordered TAD to selection boards should be given a two-day education/refresher in fitness reporting factors, nuances and procedures.

4. The implementation of a new phased approach to officer evaluation should be accomplished progressively over the period of several years in order to minimize disruption to current policies. For example, newly commissioned Ensigns would start their careers using MBO as an initial evaluation procedure, or recently selected Commanders and Captains would be screened for command by assessment centers.

5. The specialized natures of the different staff corps should be recognized, and evaluation of officers in these specialties should be accommodated in the performance appraisal process.

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